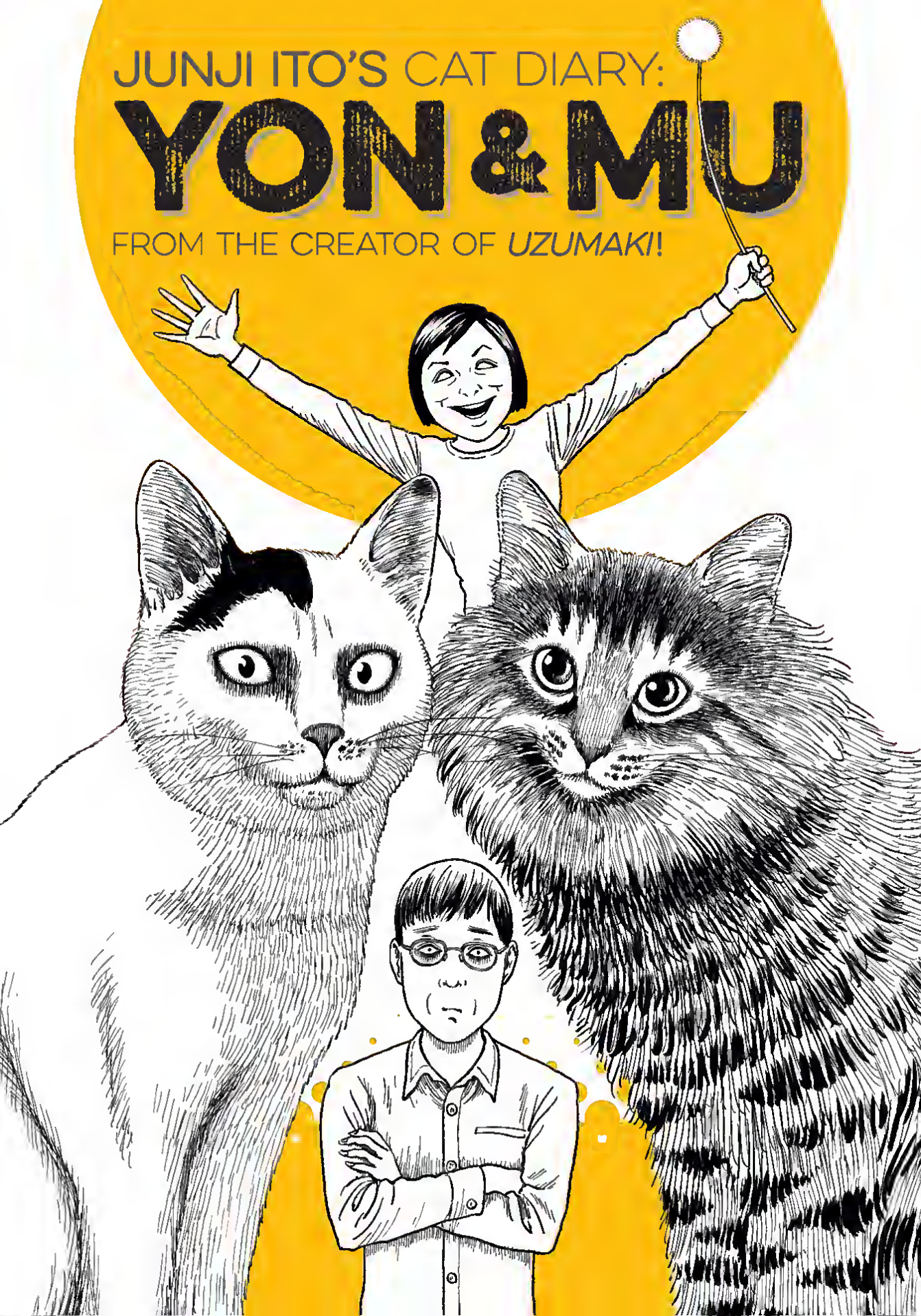
JUNJI ITO'S CAT DIARY:
YON & MU

FROM THE CREATOR OF *UZUMAKI*!



JUNJI ITO'S CAT DIARY: YON & MU

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YON & MU

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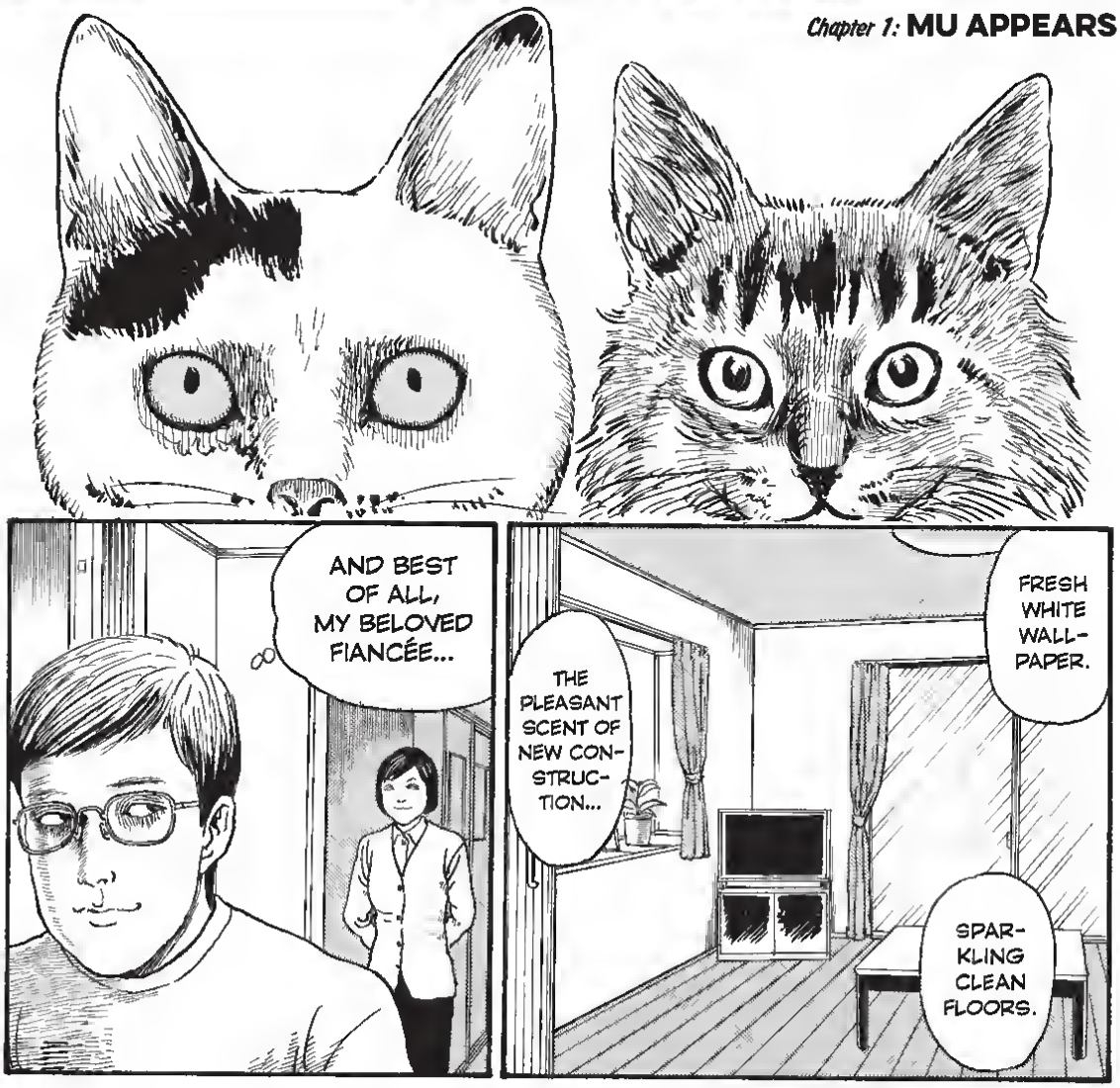
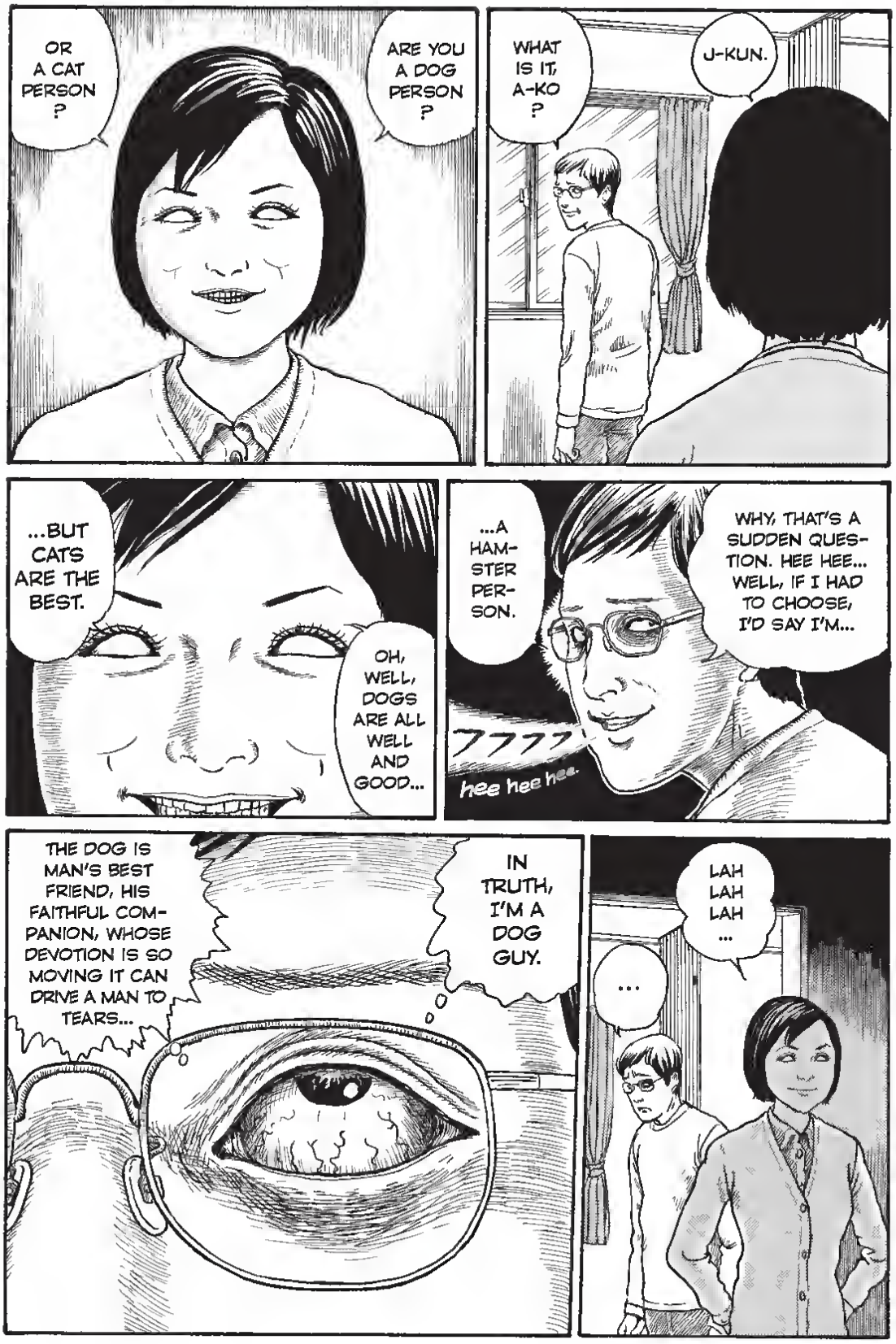
Chapter 1: MU APPEARS


AND BEST OF ALL, MY BELOVED FIANCÉE...
THE PLEASANT SCENT OF NEW CONSTRUCTION...
FRESH WHITE WALLPAPER.
SPARKLING CLEAN FLOORS.

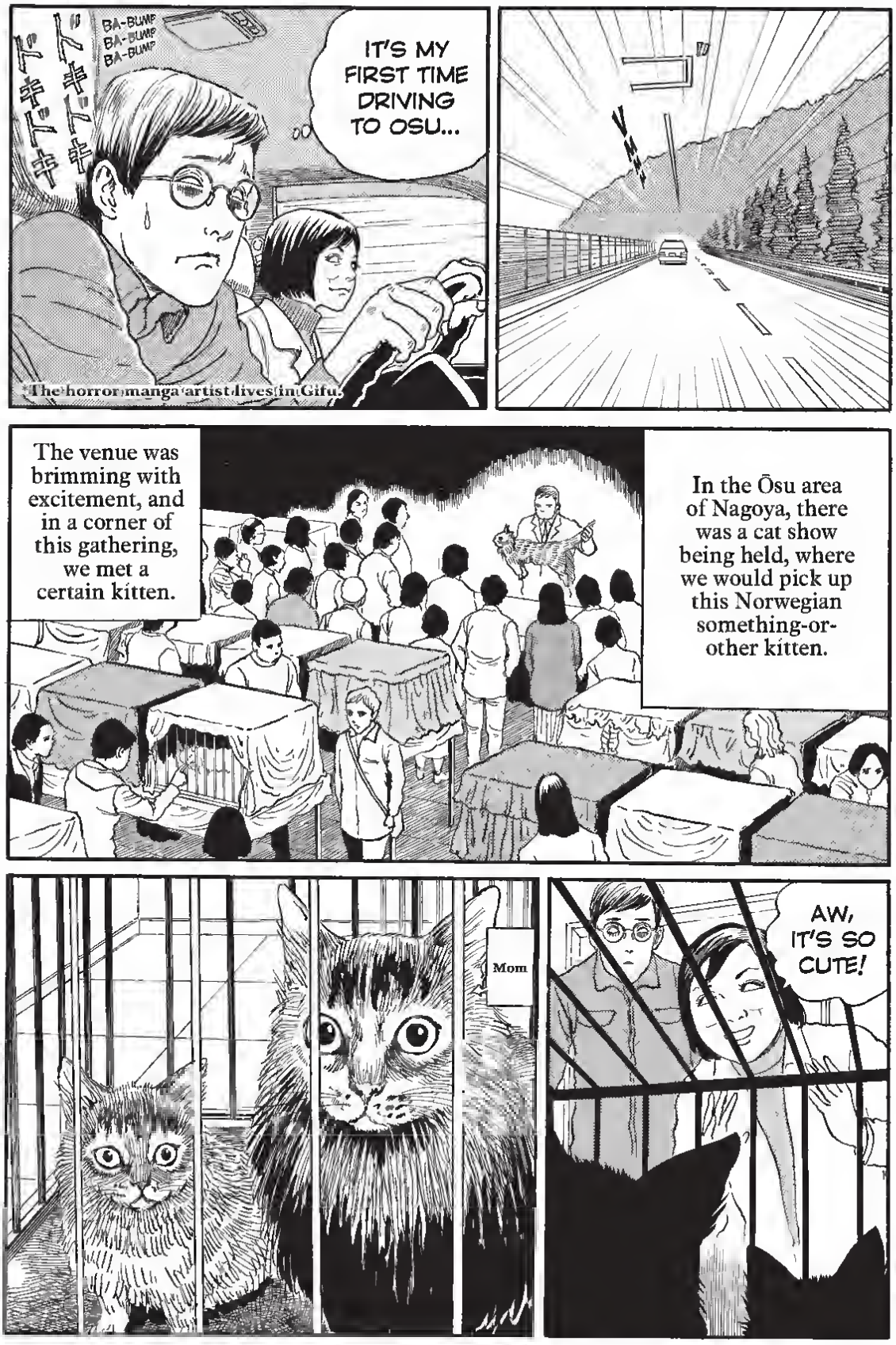

ARE YOU A DOG PERSON?
OR A CAT PERSON?
J-KUN.
WHAT IS IT, A-KO?
OH, WELL, DOGS ARE ALL WELL AND GOOD...
...BUT CATS ARE THE BEST.
WHY, THAT'S A SUDDEN QUESTION. HEE HEE... WELL, IF I HAD TO CHOOSE, I'D SAY I'M...
...A HAMSTER PERSON.
hee hee hee.
IN TRUTH, I'M A DOG GUY.
THE DOG IS MAN'S BEST FRIEND, HIS FAITHFUL COMPANION, WHOSE DEVOTION IS SO MOVING IT CAN DRIVE A MAN TO TEARS...
LAH LAH LAH ...
...

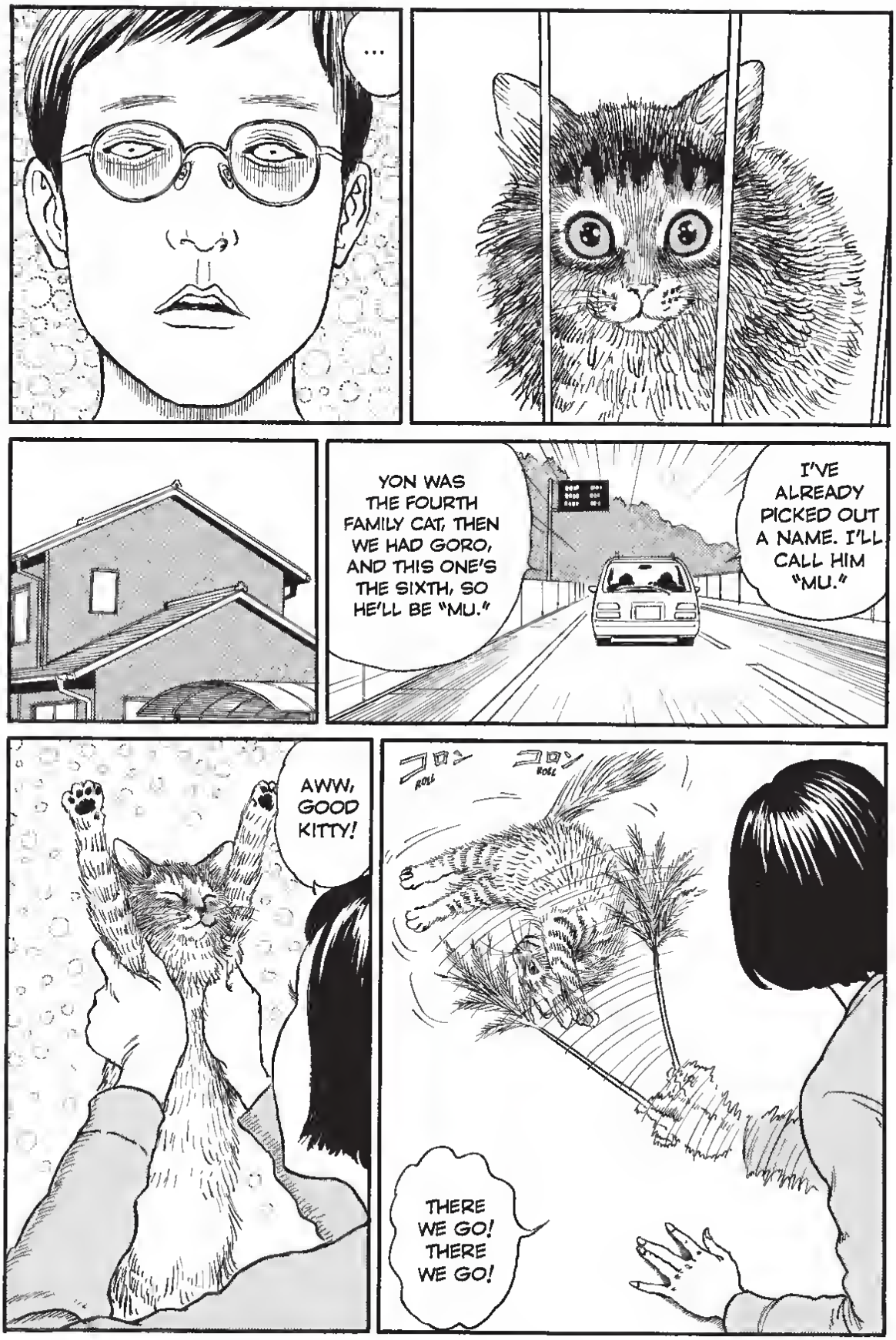
WHAT ?
YOU CAN PUT IT TOGETHER NOW.
LOOK, J-KUN, THE CAT TOWER ARRIVED.
DELIVERY!
YON ...
...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? REMEMBER HOW I SAID I'M BRINGING YON OVER FROM MY PARENT'S HOUSE IN CHIBA?
Love Cat
WHY WOULD YOU BUY THAT?
C... CAT TOWER ?
...I MET YON ...
YON...OF COURSE. A FEW MONTHS AGO, WHEN I VISITED A-KO'S PARENTS' HOME FOR THE FIRST TIME...

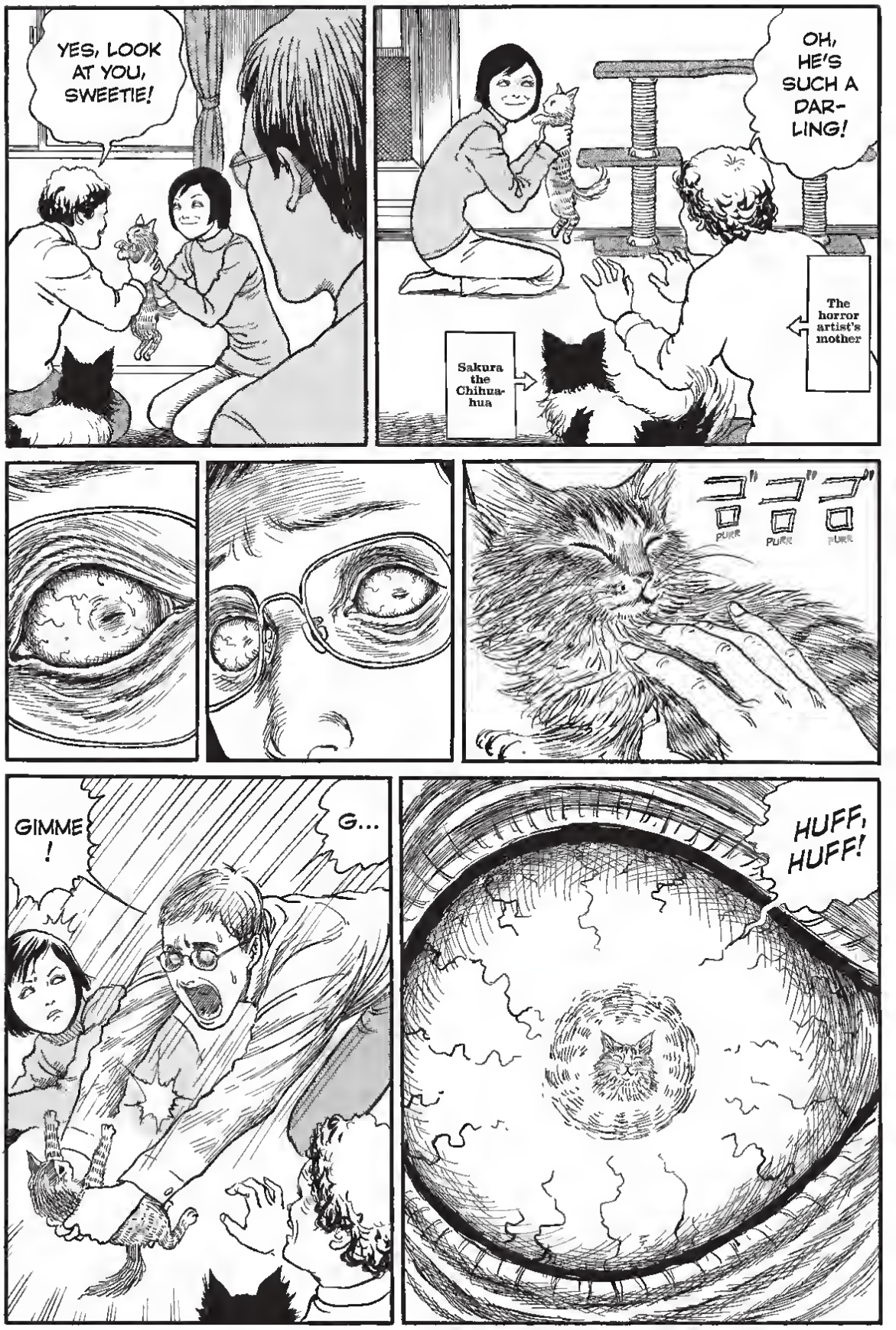
ANYONE WOULD AGREE...
...THAT THIS CAT HAS A CURSED FACE...
THE AC-CURSED CAT...
...IN MY HOME ?!
NEVER, ABSO-LUTELY NOT...
NOT IN MY HOUSE !
I Love Cats

WE DON'T WANT THE CAT TO SCRATCH THE WALLS, SO I BOUGHT SOME PROTECTIVE SHEETS.
HELP ME STICK THEM UP.
LABEL Catty Covers
WHAT IS IT, A-KO?
J-KUN.
I DON'T LIKE THIS AT ALL !!
ピピ
R-I-I-I-P
I DON'T LIKE IT. NOT ONE BIT...
ALL THAT BEAUTIFUL, NEW WALL-PAPER, VIOLATED BY THESE AWFUL, SHINY SHEETS...
OH, NO...
...SO I'M USING PINS TO STICK IT UP INSTEAD.
NORMALLY, YOU'D USE DOUBLE-SIDED TAPE TO PUT THESE UP, BUT I DON'T WANT IT TO TEAR THE WALLPAPER WHEN IT'S REMOVED...

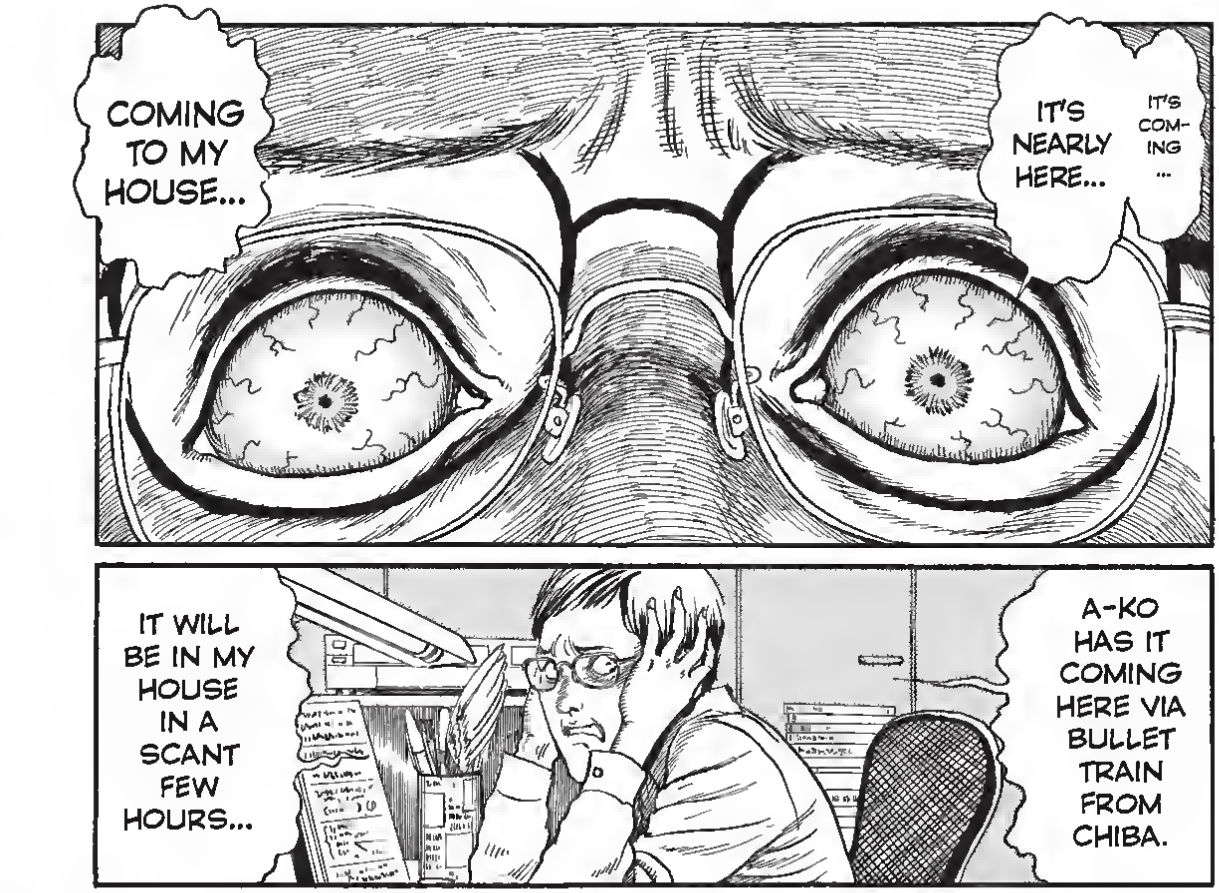
J-KUN.
WHAT IS IT NOW?
phaw
NOTHING TO DO NOW BUT WELCOME YON AND HIS ACCURSED FACE.
YON'S GOING TO BE SO LONELY ON HIS OWN.
HE COULD USE A LITTLE FRIEND TO PLAY WITH.
THIS ONE IS A BREED CALLED THE "NORWEGIAN FOREST CAT."
LOOK AT THIS THING MY FRIEND SENT ME. IT'S A LIST OF ADORABLE KITTENS WHO NEED A HOME...
A SINGLE CAT IS ONE THING, BUT A PAIR...?
WH-WHAT...? ANOTHER CAT?!
I DON'T LIKE IT...
I DON'T LIKE IT...
I DON'T LIKE IT AT ALL!!

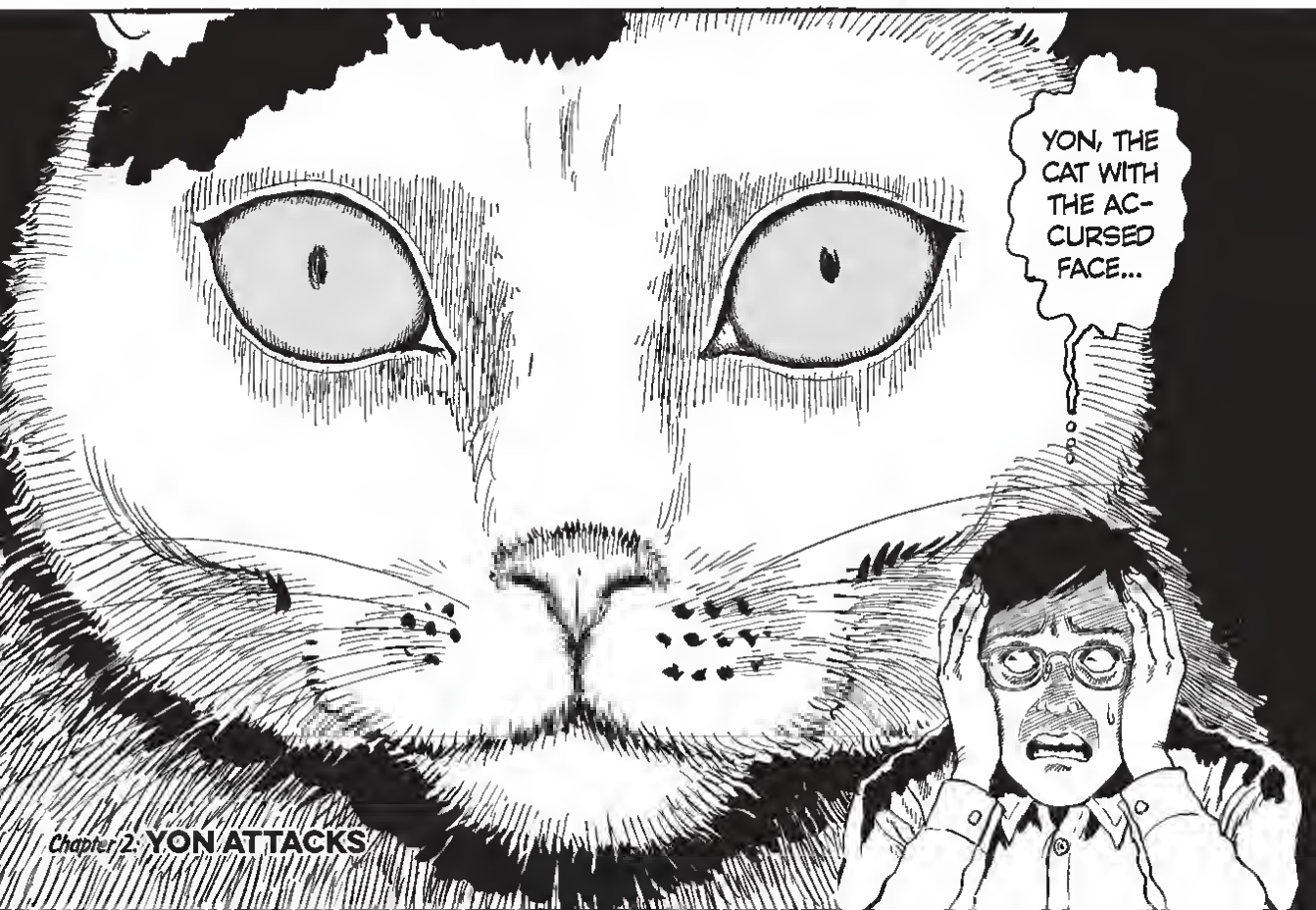

BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
IT'S MY FIRST TIME DRIVING TO OSU...
*The horror manga artist lives in Gifu.
The venue was brimming with excitement, and in a corner of this gathering, we met a certain kitten.
In the Ōsu area of Nagoya, there was a cat show being held, where we would pick up this Norwegian something-or-other kitten.
Mom
AW, IT'S SO CUTE!

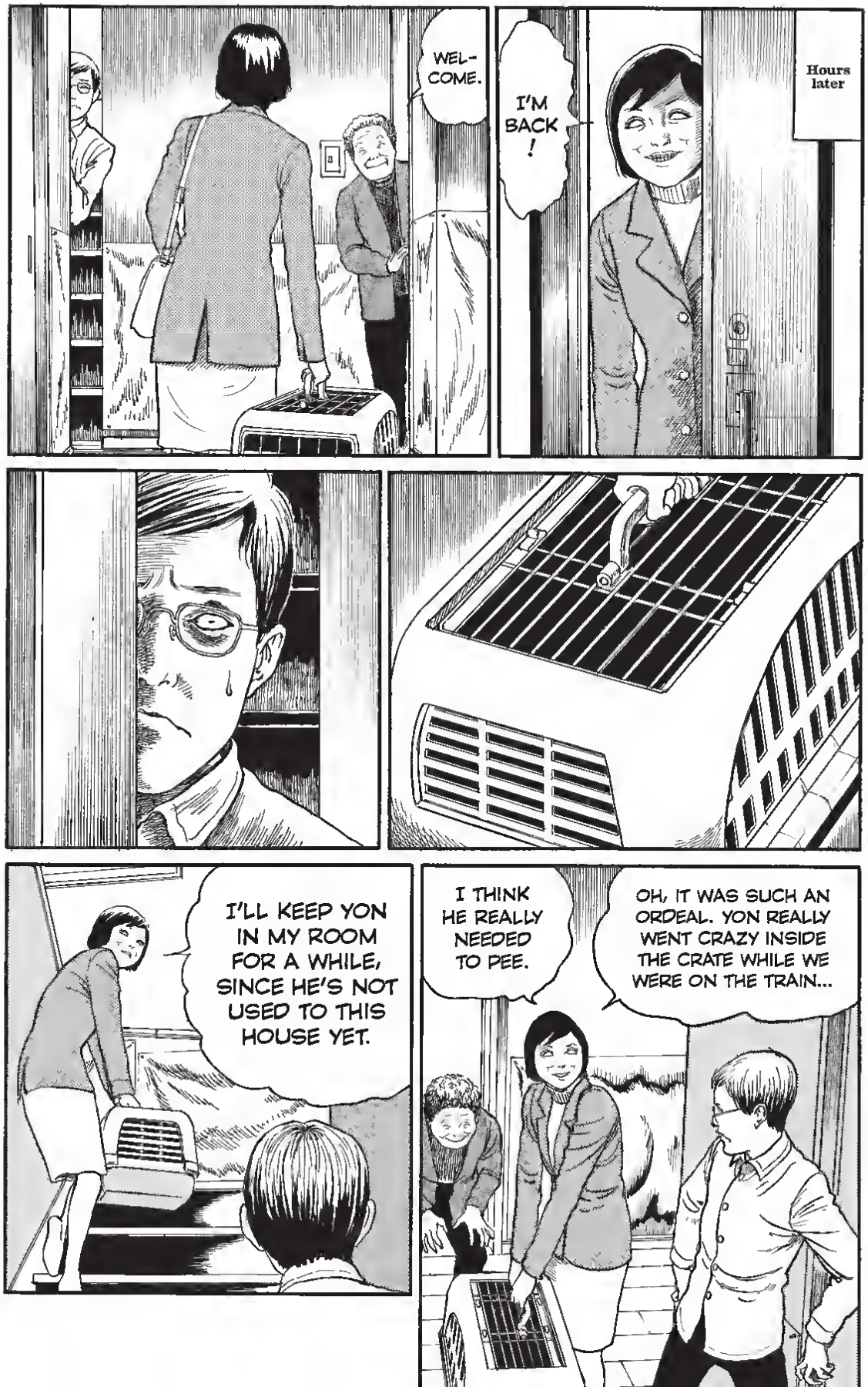

...
YON WAS THE FOURTH FAMILY CAT, THEN WE HAD GORO, AND THIS ONE'S THE SIXTH, SO HE'LL BE "MU."
I'VE ALREADY PICKED OUT A NAME. I'LL CALL HIM "MU."
AWW, GOOD KITTY!
コロン ROLL
コロン ROLL
THERE WE GO! THERE WE GO!


YES, LOOK AT YOU, SWEETIE!
OH, HE'S SUCH A DAR-LING!
The horror artist's mother
Sakura the Chihua-hua
ゴゴゴ
PURR
PURR
PURR
GIMME !
G...
HUFF, HUFF!

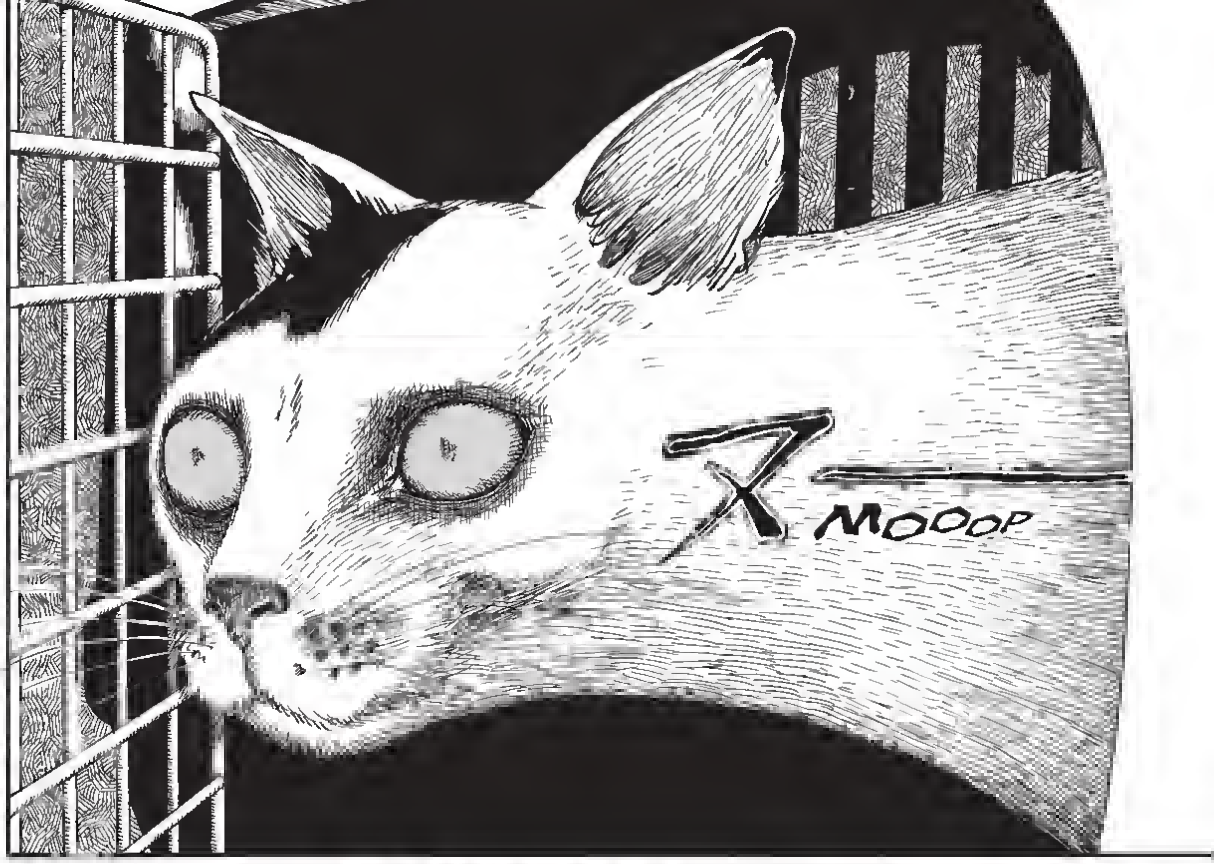
SMOOCH! SMOOCHY SMOOCHY SMOO!
I'M GOING TO GOBBLE YOU UP!
WHY, YOU LITTLE ...
OH, I'M GONNA GOBBLE YOU UP!!
ROLL
ROLL
SMOOCH
SMOOCH
SMOOCH
SMOOCH

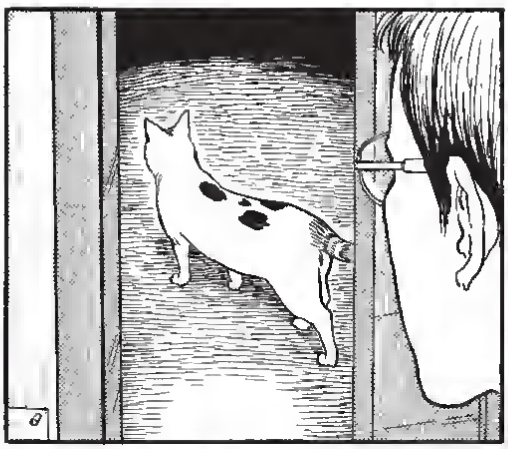

COMING TO MY HOUSE...
IT'S NEARLY HERE...
IT'S COM-ING ...
IT WILL BE IN MY HOUSE IN A SCANT FEW HOURS...
A-KO HAS IT COMING HERE VIA BULLET TRAIN FROM CHIBA.

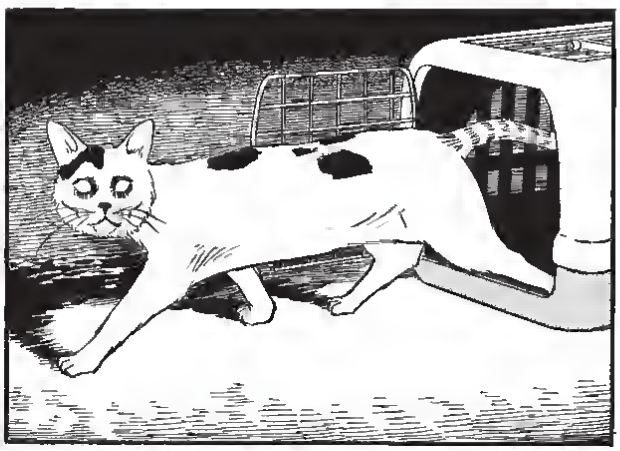

YON, THE CAT WITH THE AC-CURSED FACE...

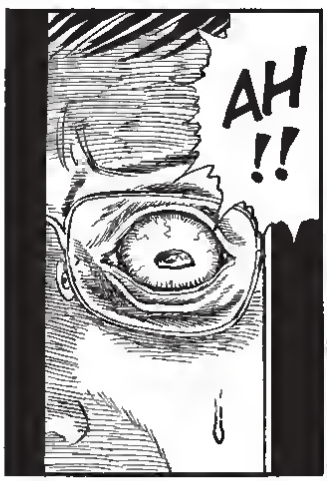

WEL-
COME.
I'M
BACK
!
Hours
later
I'LL KEEP YON
IN MY ROOM
FOR A WHILE,
SINCE HE'S NOT
USED TO THIS
HOUSE YET.
I THINK
HE REALLY
NEEDED
TO PEE.
OH, IT WAS SUCH AN
ORDEAL. YON REALLY
WENT CRAZY INSIDE
THE CRATE WHILE WE
WERE ON THE TRAIN...

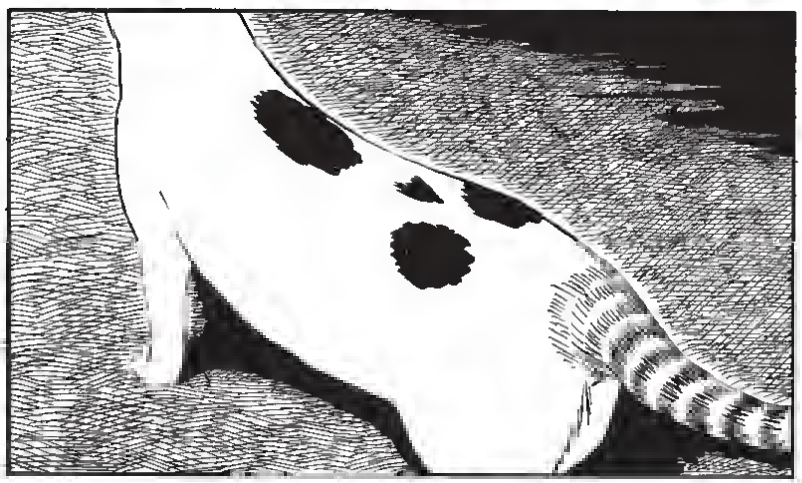
THUMP
CLICK
CREAK


MOOOP

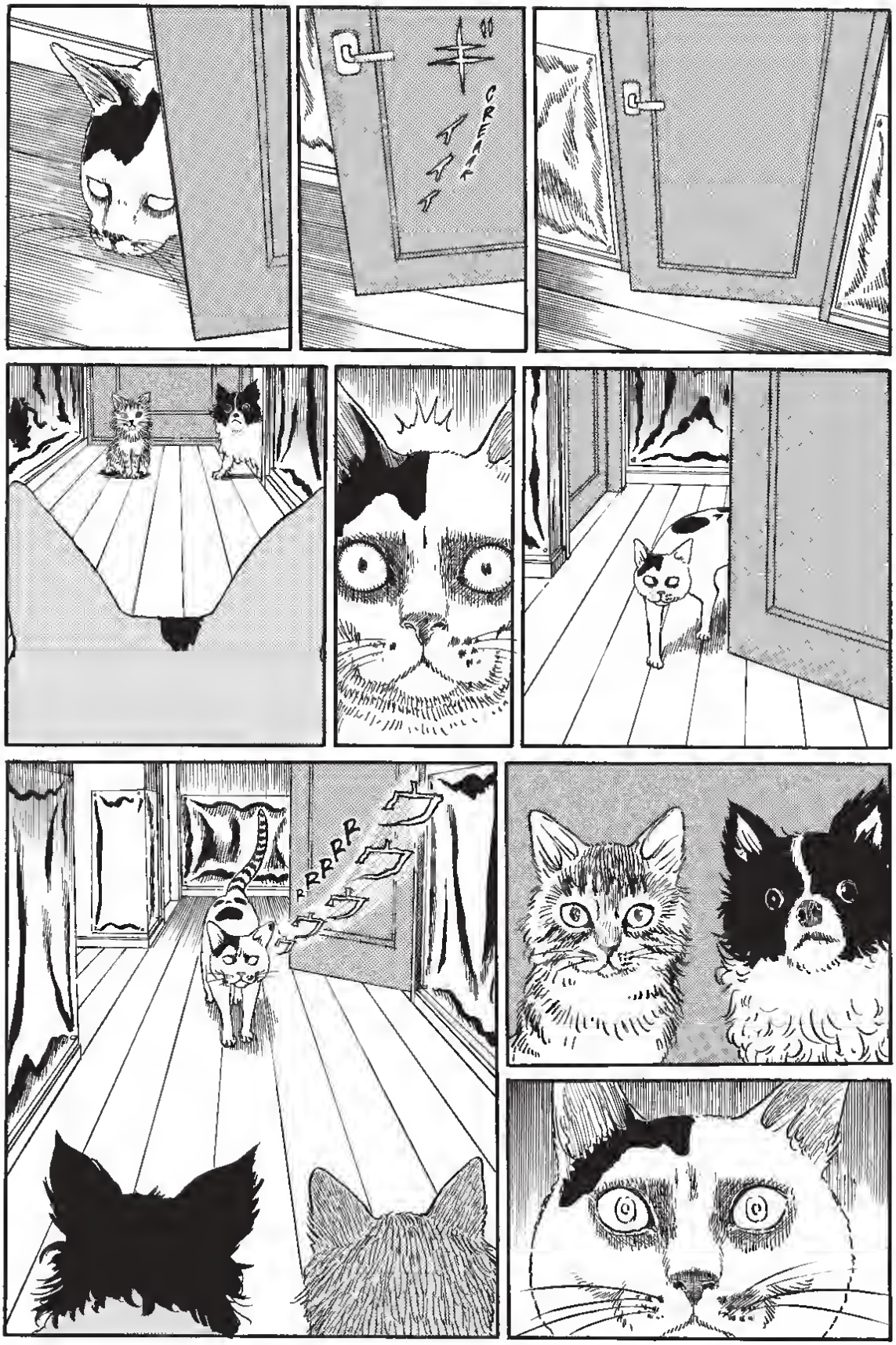





AH
!!



RIGHT ON YON'S BACK ...
...A SKULL MARK-ING!
IT'S C-CURSED ...
THAT CAT REALLY IS CURSED ...
THE ACCURSED CAT IS HERE!
A CURSE IS UPON MY HOUSE-HOLD!


CREAK
RRRR

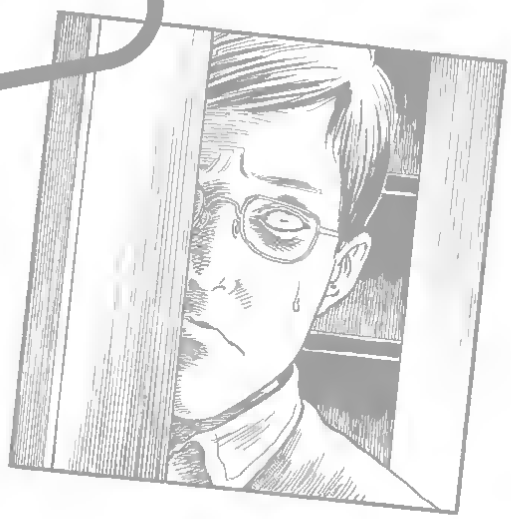
J-KUN...
Then ...
CRIK
... later that night.
CRIK
IS HE CURSING US?
WH-WHAT'S UP WITH YON?
I'M GOING TO WATCH OVER HIM IN MY ROOM TONIGHT ...
YON HASN'T BEEN EATING AND HE'S REALLY LETHARGIC.
UNGHHH...
IT'S YON... YON, HE'S...

YON-CHAN...
YON-CHAN...
Under A-ko's care that night, he recovered his energy bit by bit.
Having been whisked away to an unfamiliar location, Yon was under an incredible amount of stress.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING OVER THERE?
HEY, A-KO.
CHUP
CHUP
CHUP
...Yon was already best of friends with Mu the kitten.
By the third day ...

チュポ
チュポ
チュポ
チュポ
SEE, HE THINKS IT'S A TEAT. AS BIG AS HE LOOKS, HE'S STILL JUST A YEAR OLD, YOU KNOW.
LOOK, HE'S SUCK-LING.
...but just a cat with a "weird" face.
HE'S SUCK-LING, HUH ...?
That was when I realized that Yon was not a cat with a "cursed" face...
G-GIMME!
He looks weird, but he's kind of cute in that way...

SUCKLE, I COM-MAND YOU!!
SUCKLE ON ME!
...and the "weird-faced" Yon joined my humble family.
What a purrculiar dwelling they've brought me to...
HRRRGH!
Thus the placid, gentle Mu...
HE ONLY WANTS TO SUCKLE WITH ME, DEAR.
HEE HEE ...
HRRRGH!

Question for you, J-SENSEI!



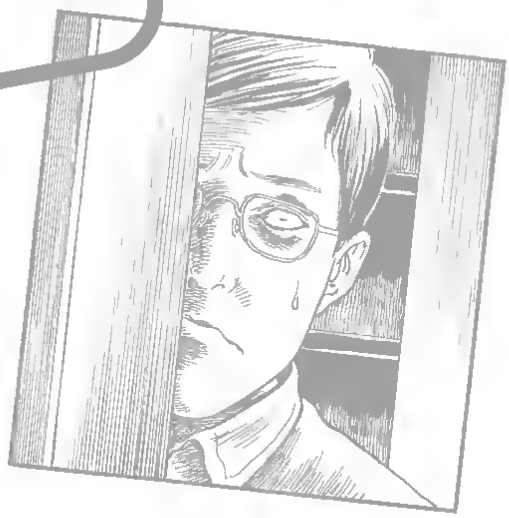
Question 1:

I understand you're the vice-chairman of your local town council. I hope you'll draw a side story for *Yon & Mu* called "The Vice-Chairman's a Horror Artist?!" By the way…what exactly does a town council vice-chairman do?

Answer:

Mostly, I just do accounting—making arrangements to gather council funds at the end of the month and managing income. I'm actually rather poor at calculating, so I have to be careful not to make mistakes. And as the chairman's assistant, I help out with town events and ceremonies. Recently, the council had a new year's party, and acting as the chairman's coordinator was a very busy job.

Question for you, J-SENSEI!

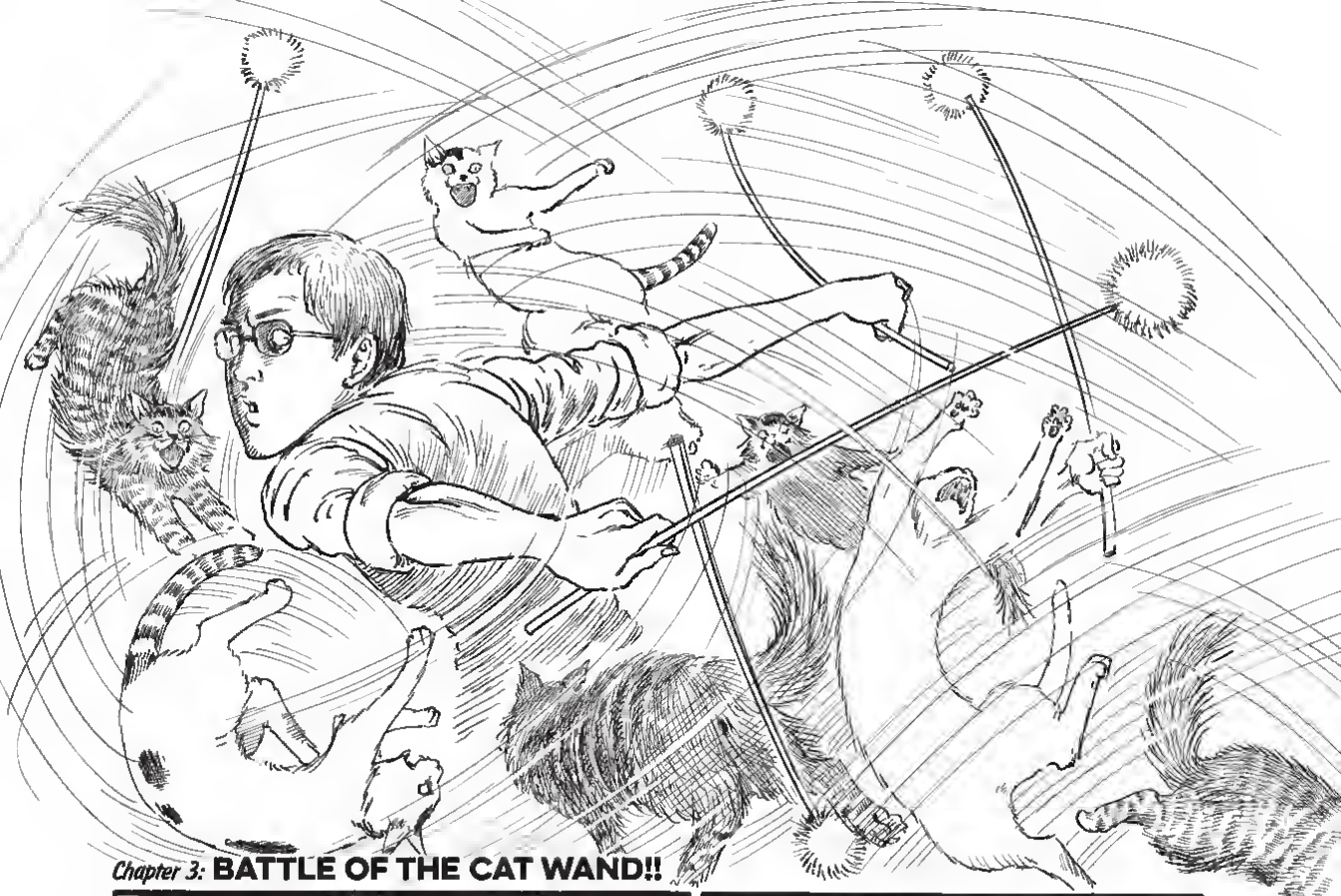


Question 2:

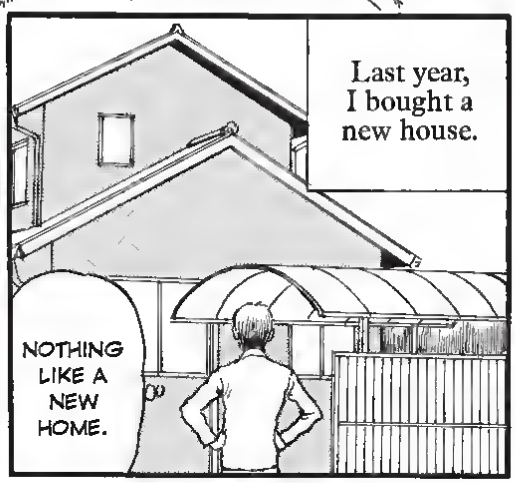
I've read that right after your debut as a manga artist, you had your mother and older sister help you with some work as assistants. Are the rumors true that they were even better at filling-in blacks than you?

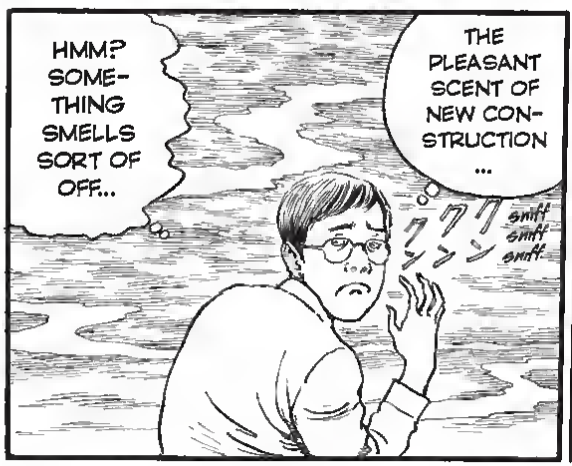
Answer:

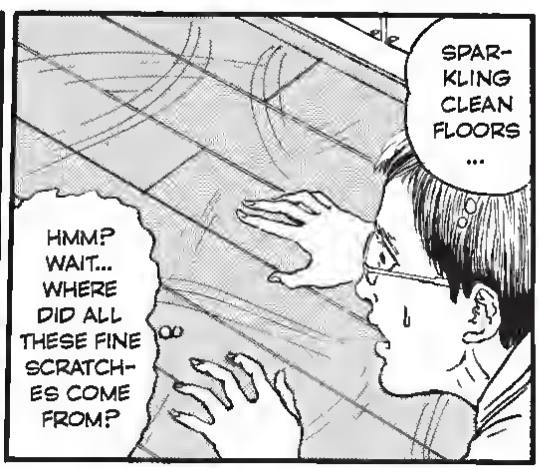
When I let them handle that task, they actually did it better than me. I'm particularly bad at pasting screentones, so my mother and sister would do a better a job. Now it's my wife and mother who help out.

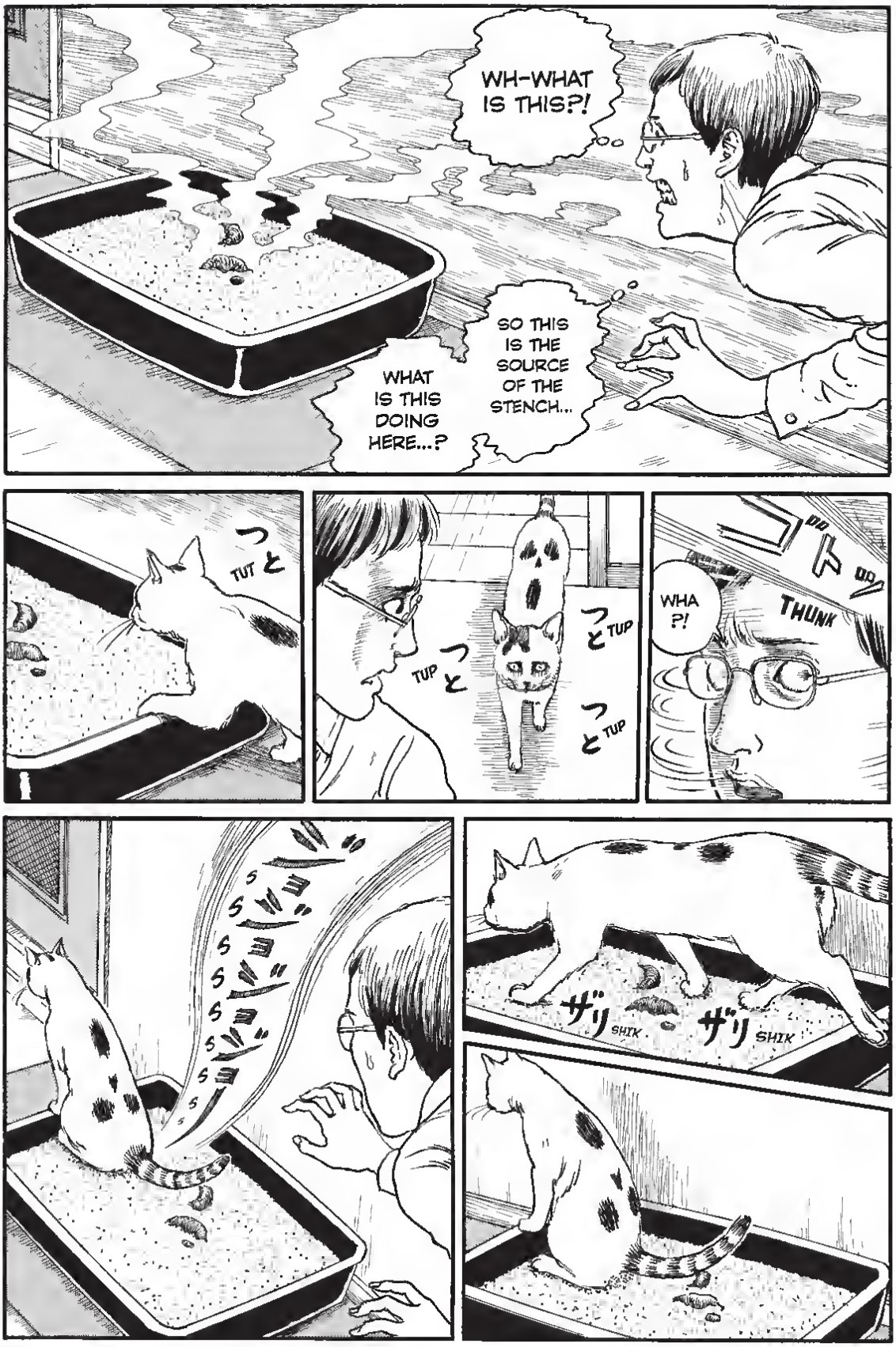


Chapter 3: BATTLE OF THE CAT WAND!!



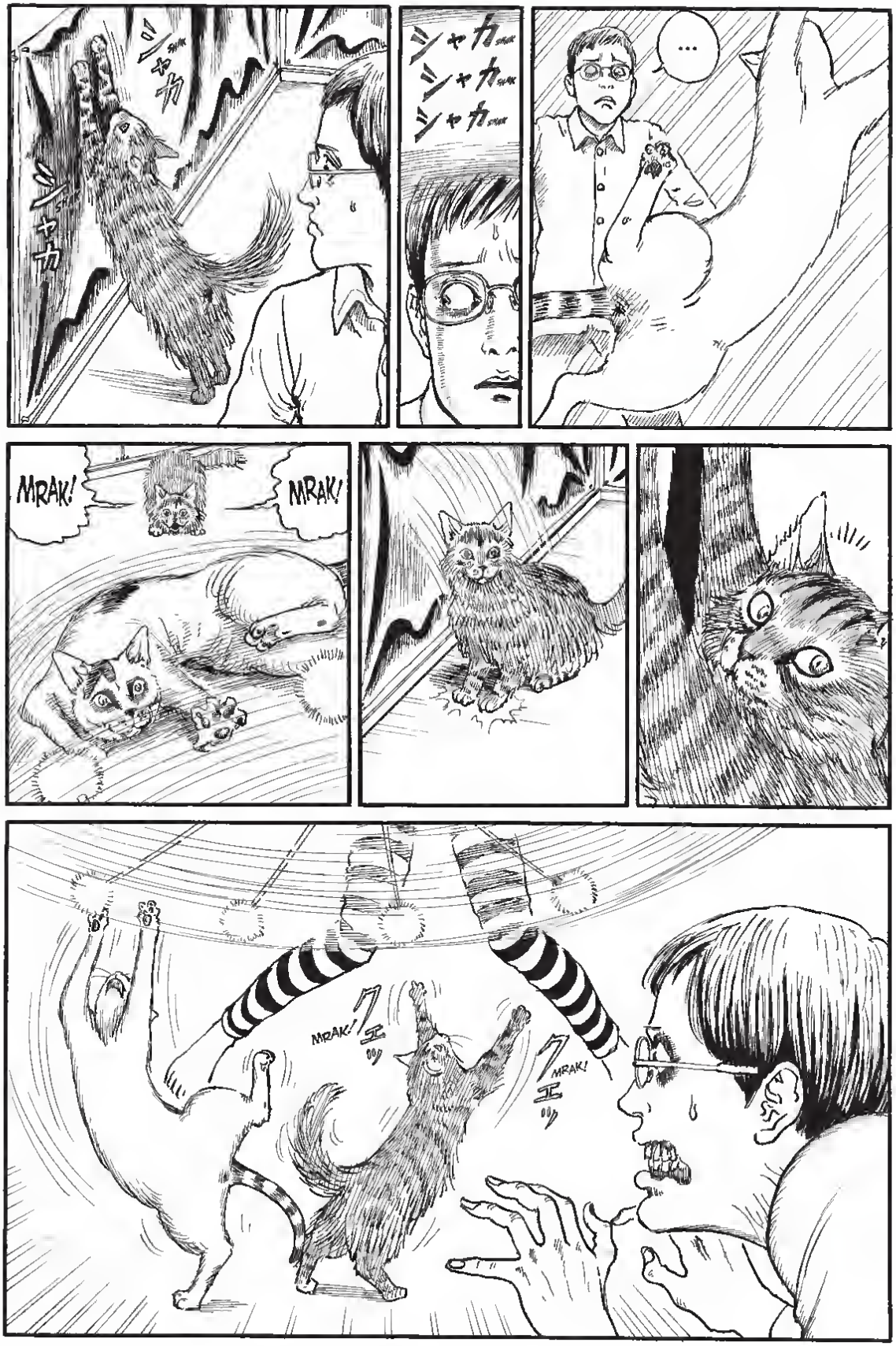





WH-WHAT IS THIS?!
SO THIS IS THE SOURCE OF THE STENCH...
WHAT IS THIS DOING HERE...?
つと TUT
つと TUP
つと TUP
つと TUP
ゴト
THUNK
WHA ?!
ザリ SHIK
ザリ SHIK

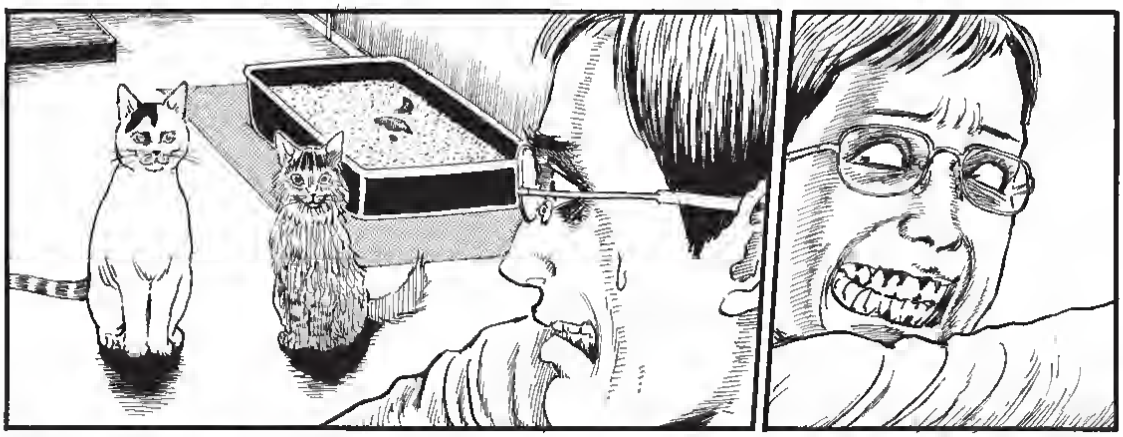
HEY! J!
HUH ?!
YON AND MU...
THAT'S RIGHT. WE HAVE CATS HERE...
ジョジョ
OF COURSE... IT WAS THE CAT!!
THE CAT IS... URINAT-ING!!
SHP
A-KO ...
TAP
TAPPA

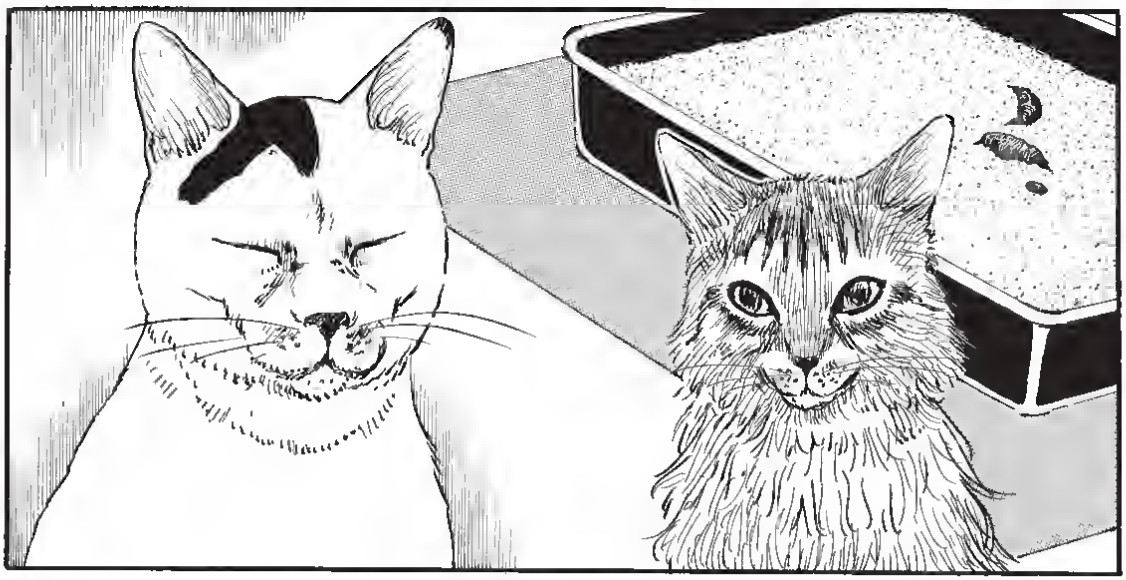
シャカ SHUCKA
シャカ SHUCKA
シャカ SHUCKA
コン TAP
コン TAP
コン TAP
シュッ SWIP
シュッ SWIP
カ SHUCKA
カ SHUCKA
カ WHAK
ト TUMP
ガリッ SCRAPE


シャカ
シャカ
シャカ
シャカ
シャカ
シャカ
…
MRAK!
MRAK!
MRAK!
MRAK!

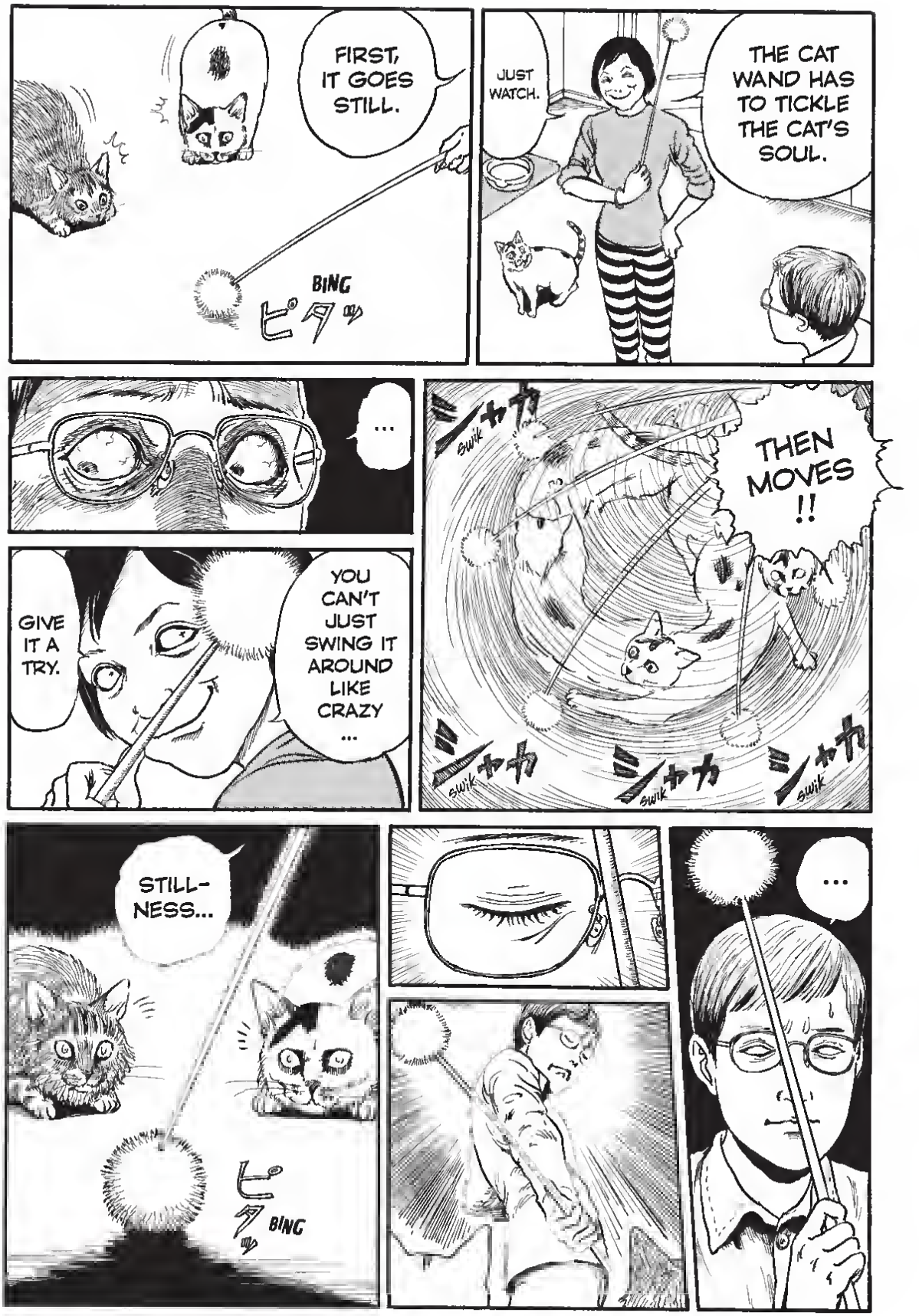
WREAK-ING HAVOC IN MY BRAND NEW HOME !!
WHAT...? BOTH YON AND MU...
ガリッ
シャカ
ギッ
GIVE THAT TO ME!
WHAT ?
A-KO !!
BACK AND FORTH AND ALL AROUND!!
SWING-ING IT WITH ABAN-DON...
WAVING AND TWIRLING THIS STUPID STICK!!

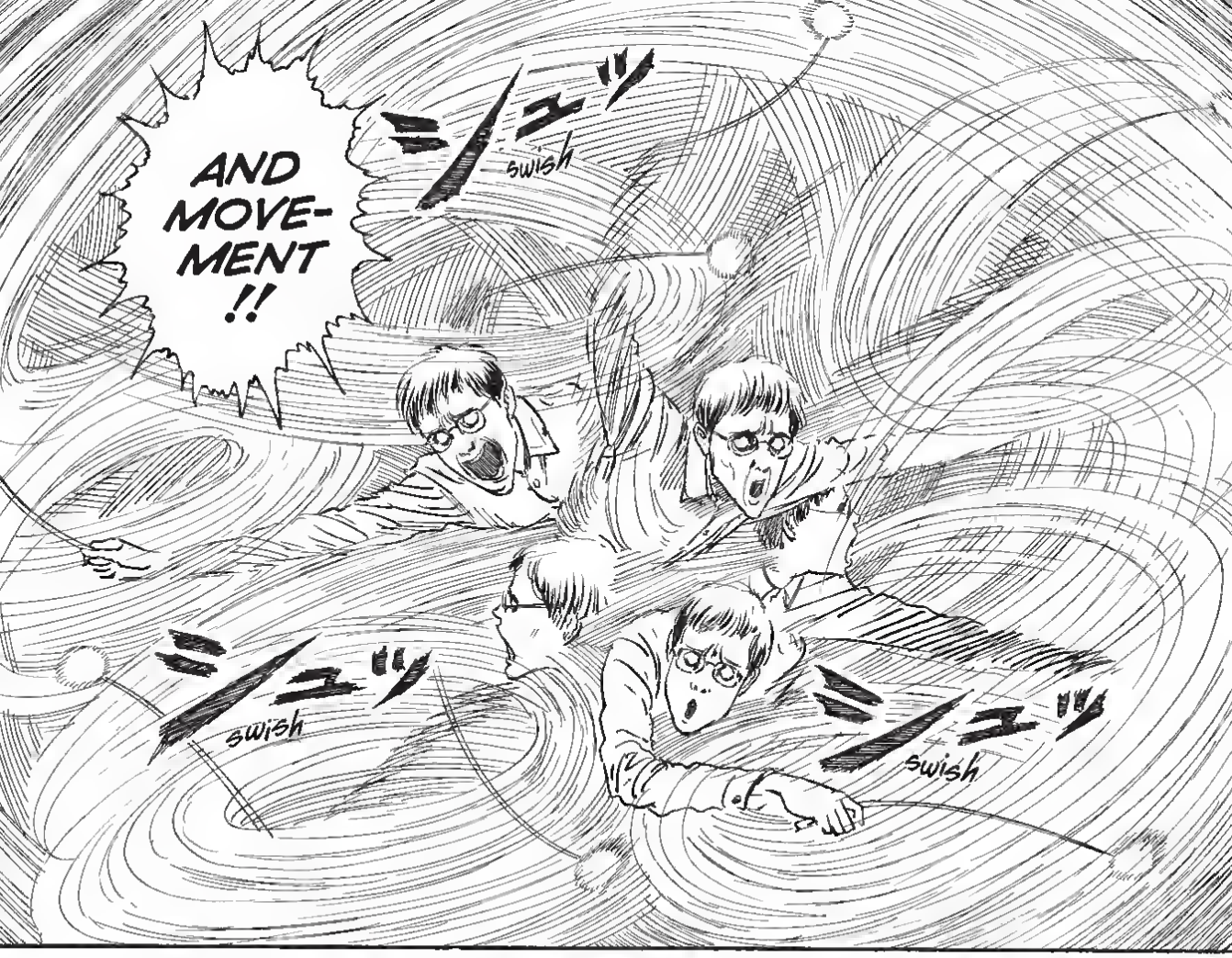
COME ON!
YOU LOVE IT!
YOU KNOW
YOU LOVE IT!!

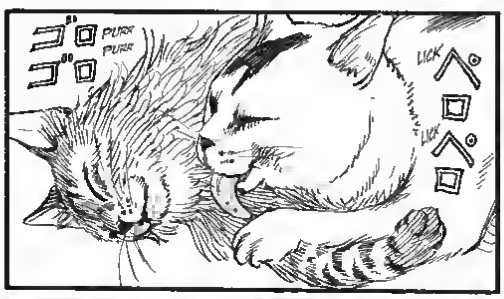




シュッ
swish
シュッ
swish
シュッ
swish
SORRY, J-KUN, YOU JUST DON'T KNOW HOW TO DO IT. LET ME SHOW YOU.
WHY ...?
...

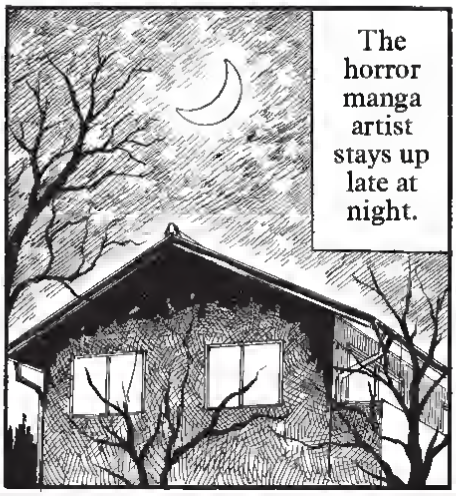

FIRST, IT GOES STILL.
BING
ピタッ
JUST WATCH.
THE CAT WAND HAS TO TICKLE THE CAT'S SOUL.
...
GIVE IT A TRY.
YOU CAN'T JUST SWING IT AROUND LIKE CRAZY ...
THEN MOVES !!
ミャカ
swik
STILL-NESS...
ピタッ
BING
...


AND MOVE-MENT !!
シュッ
swish
シュッ
swish
シュッ
swish

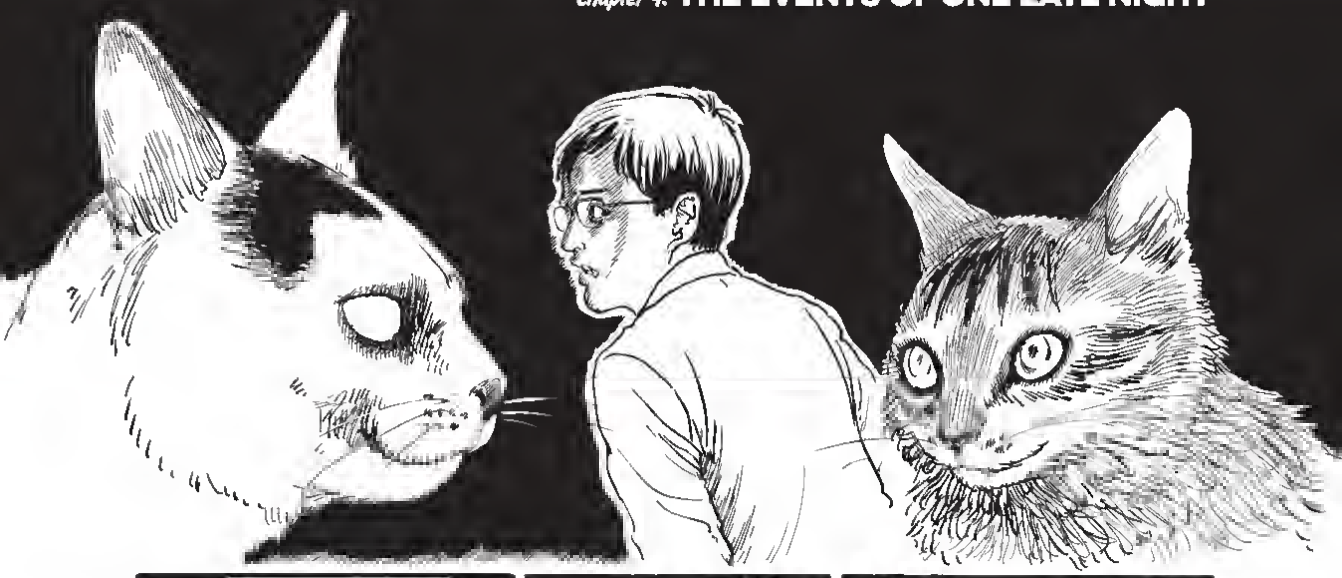

ゴロゴロ
PURR PURR
ペロペロ
LICK LICK

HRM.
THE ROAD TO CAT WAND MASTERY IS LONG AND TREACHEROUS INDEED!

MRAK! MRAK!
?!

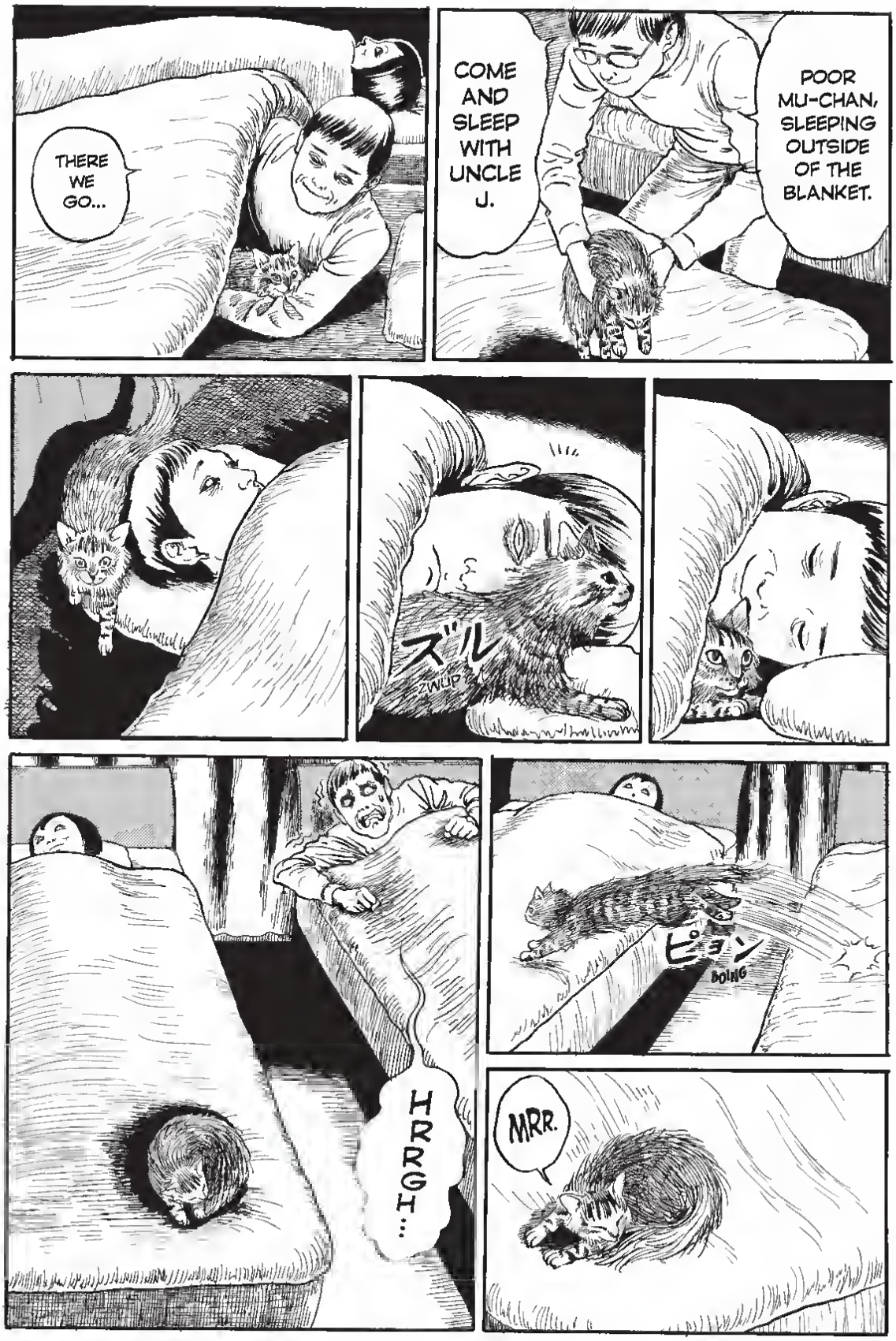


Chapter 4: THE EVENTS OF ONE LATE NIGHT

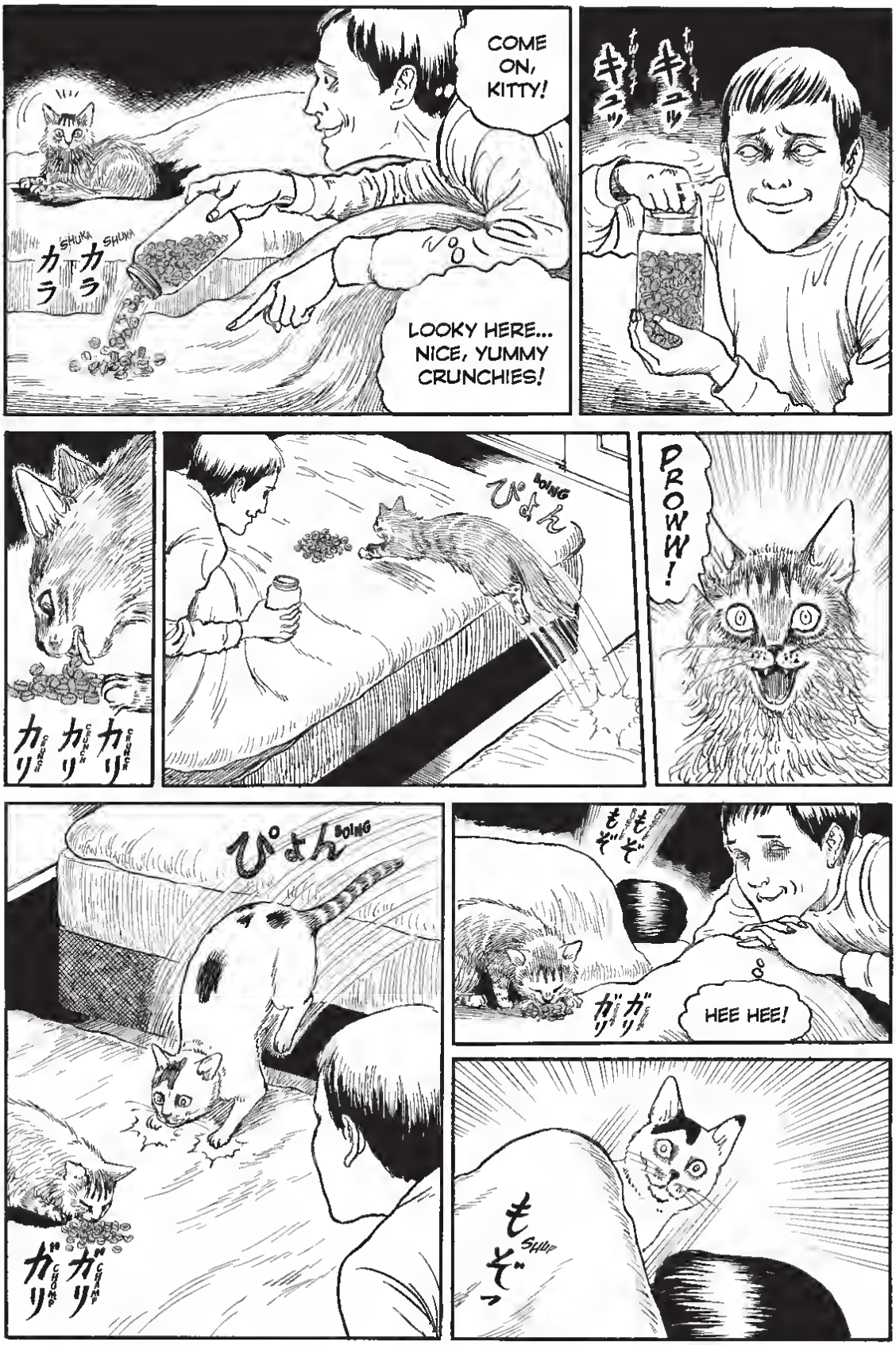


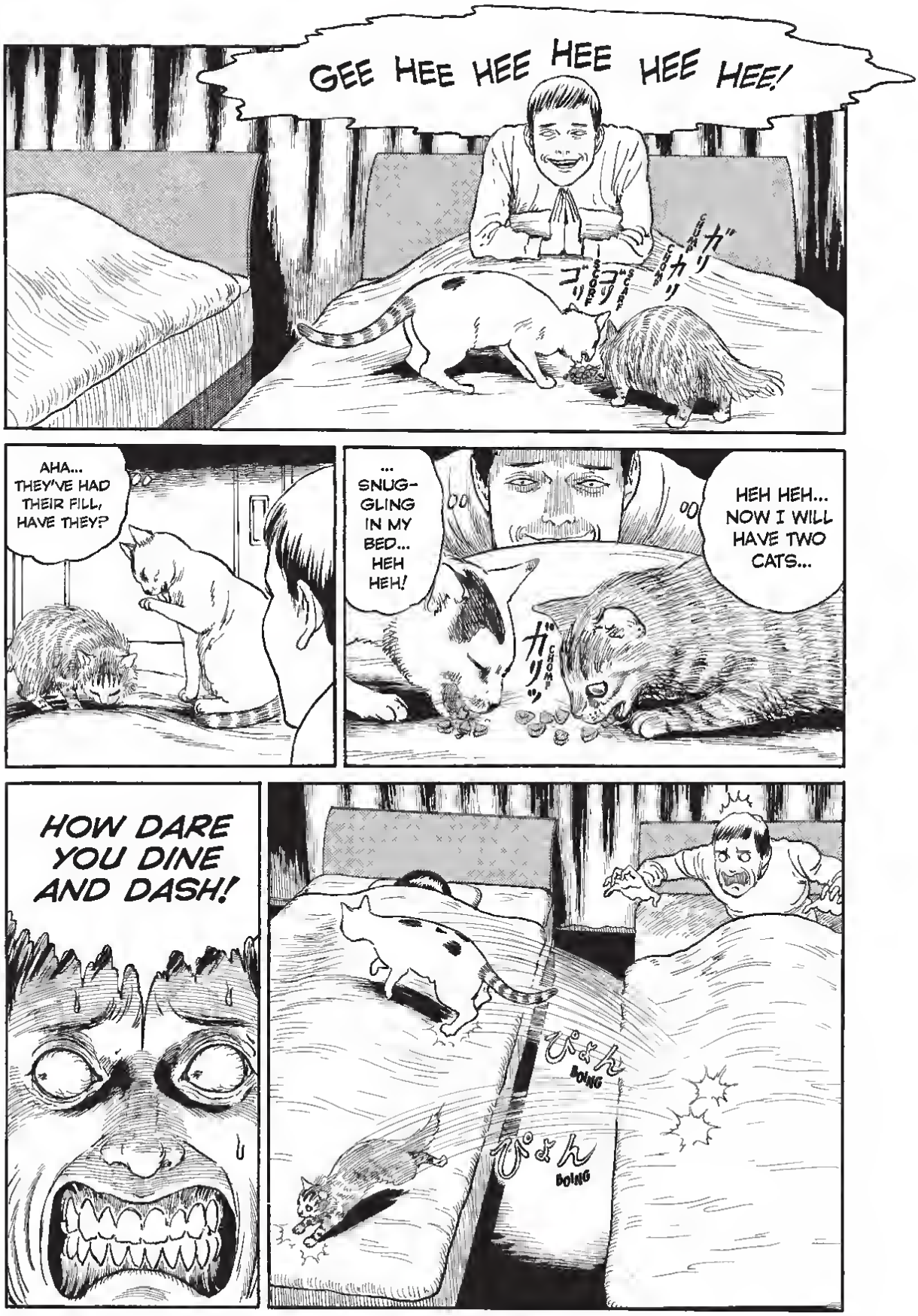
チュッ
チュッ
チュッ
チュッ
STRANGE... AN EERIE SOUND... EMANATING FROM A-KO'S BED...
チ チ チ チ
ュ ュ ュ ュ
AND THE BLANKET IS ODDLY BULGING.
A PARA-MOUR PERHAPS ?
ガバッ
WELL, IF YOU'VE GOT THE NERVE TO MAKE A MOVE ON MY WIFE...
...THERE ARE NO HARD FEELINGS IF I EXPOSE YOUR SIN FOR THE WORLD TO SEE!

チュッ
チュッ
OH...
WHY'D YOU DO THAT? IT'S TOO COLD.
PUT THE BLANKET BACK OVER US.
OH... IT WAS JUST YON, SUCKLING ON HER FINGER AGAIN ...
THE NERVE OF THOSE TWO ...
TIME FOR BED.

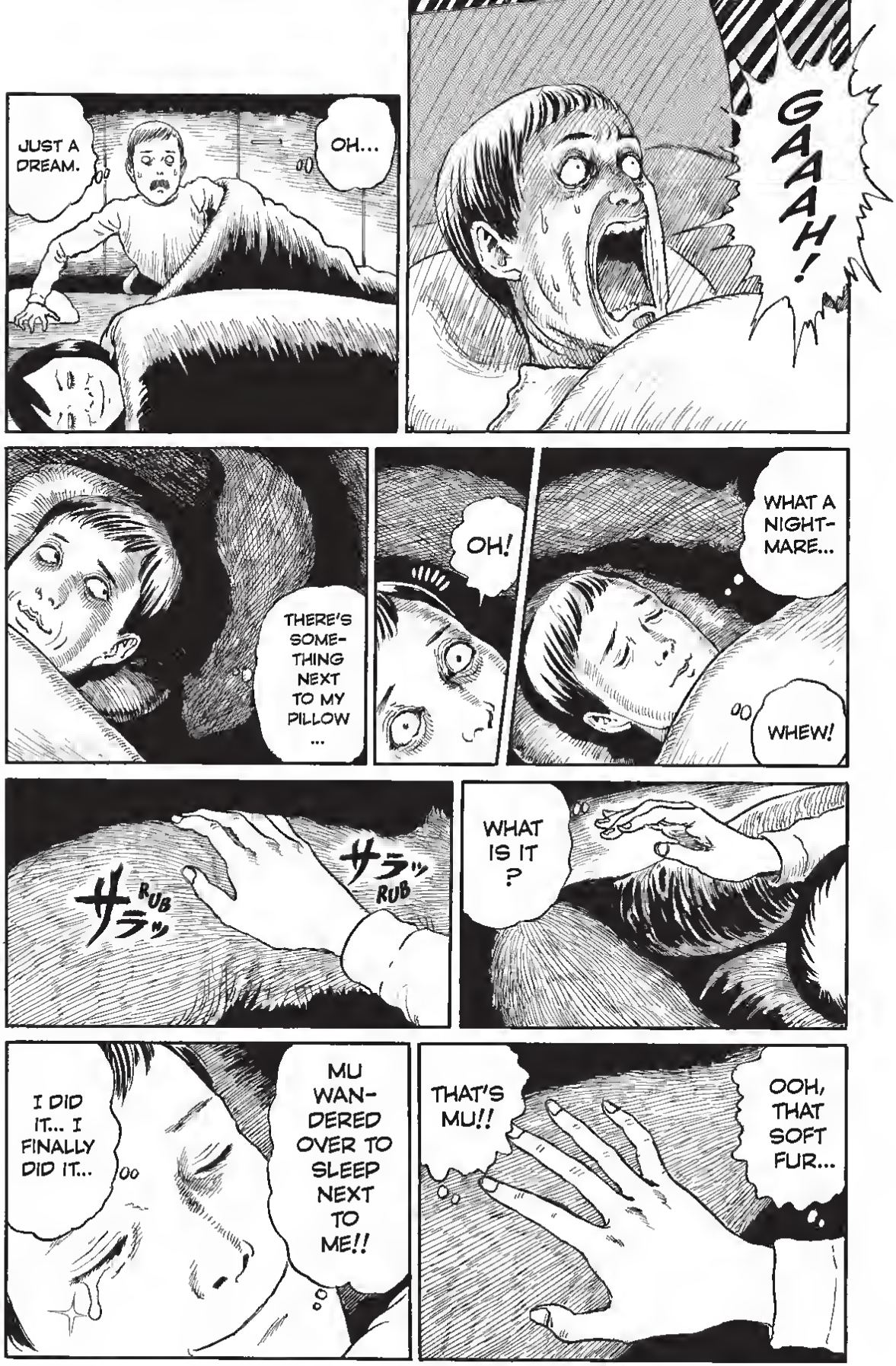

THERE WE GO...
COME AND SLEEP WITH UNCLE J.
POOR MU-CHAN, SLEEPING OUTSIDE OF THE BLANKET.
ズル
ZWUP
ピョン
BOING
HRRGH...
MRR.

IF HE WANTS TO HANG OUT ON TOP OF THE BLANKET, MY BED'S A SEMI-DOUBLE WITH MORE ROOM.
OH, OKAY. BUT...
IT'S TOO HOT FOR HIM UNDER THE BLANKET.
MU'S A SCAN-DINAVIAN CAT.
チュッ
チュッ
チュッ
チュッ
チュッ
チュッ
チュッ
...
I THINK HE WANTS TO BE NEXT TO ME, BECAUSE HE LOVES ME MORE.
HEE HEE ...
IF SHE'S GOING TO USE MAGIC, THEN MY ONLY PATH TO VICTORY IS COLD, HARD BRIBERY.
THAT'S IT.
SHINJI
ガバッ
チュッ
チュッ
チュッ
チュッ
チュッ
チュッ
A-KO CLEARLY HAS SOME KIND OF BEWITCHING POWER THAT DRAWS CATKIND TO HER SIDE...
チュッ
チュッ
チュッ
チュッ
チュッ
チュッ
CURSES ...


COME ON, KITTY!
LOOKY HERE... NICE, YUMMY CRUNCHIES!
SHUKA SHUKA
カラ カラ
キュッ キュッ
カリ カリ カリ
CRUNCH CRUNCH CRUNCH
ぴょん
BOING
PROWW!
もぞ もぞ
ガリ ガリ
CRUNCH CRUNCH
HEE HEE!
もぞっ
SHUP

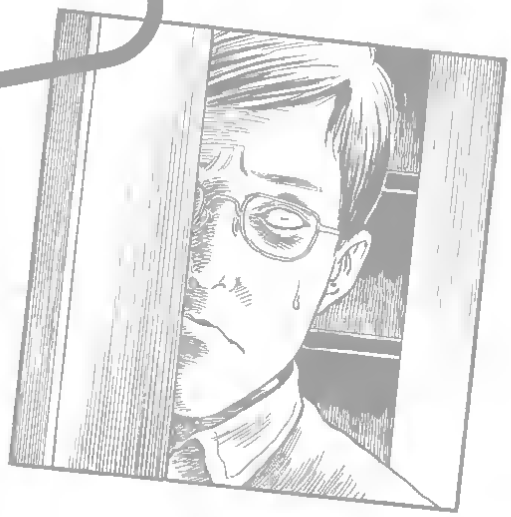

GEE HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE!
ガリ CRUNCH
ゴリ SCRUNCH
AHA... THEY'VE HAD THEIR FILL, HAVE THEY?
... SNUG-GLING IN MY BED... HEH HEH!
ガリッ CHOMP
HEH HEH... NOW I WILL HAVE TWO CATS...
HOW DARE YOU DINE AND DASH!
ぴょん BOING
ぴょん BOING

swish
swish
swish
swish
YOU LEAVE ME NO CHOICE! TIME FOR THE CAT WAND!!
COME ON! COME AND SEE!
GIVE IT A REST ...
...
LURCH
J-KUN !!
SHAAAA!!


JUST A DREAM.
OH...
GAAAH!
THERE'S SOMETHING NEXT TO MY PILLOW ...
OH!
WHAT A NIGHTMARE...
WHEW!
サラッ RUB
サラッ RUB
WHAT IS IT ?
I DID IT... I FINALLY DID IT...
MU WANDERED OVER TO SLEEP NEXT TO ME!!
THAT'S MU!!
OOH, THAT SOFT FUR...

YAAWN...
A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP.
WHA...
...
YOU REALLY LIKE SLEEPING NEAR ME THAT MUCH ?
ARE YOU STILL SNOOZING THERE, MU? GOSH ...
IT WAS JUST A FOLD IN THE BLAN-KET...
OH ...

Question for you, J-SENSEI!



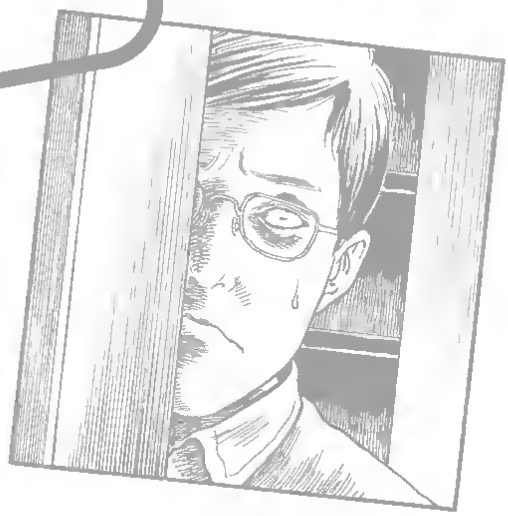
Question 3:

Have you ever used your prior experience as a dental tecŸician in your manga work? I really got a sense of your skill from how well you make your plaster figures (for sketching human forms).

Answer:

The job of a dental tecŸician is to create objects that will be placed in the patient's mouth. Therefore, dentures and the like must be made smooth as to not damage the mouth. When creating manga, I sometimes fashion tools by hand and put my skills as a tecŸician to use. I make my tools very smooth.

Question for you, J-SENSEI!

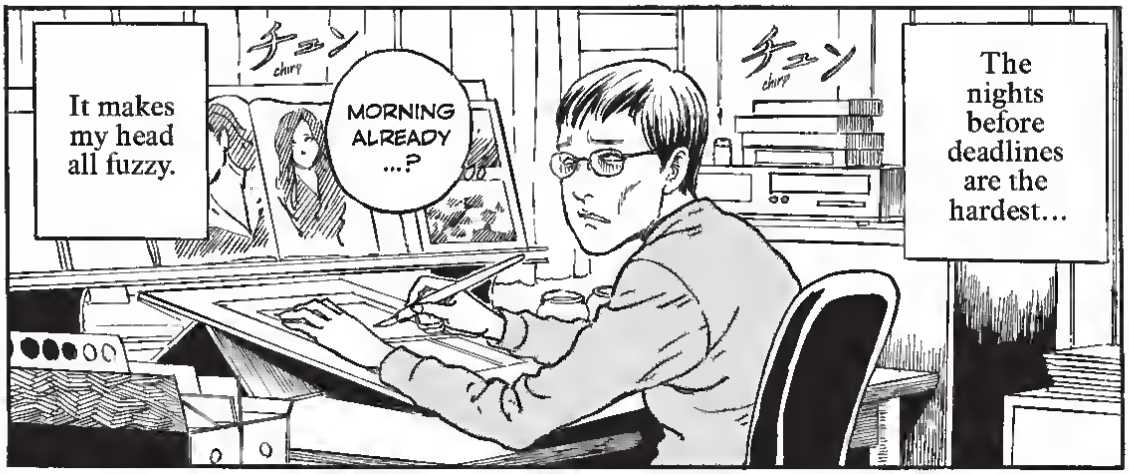


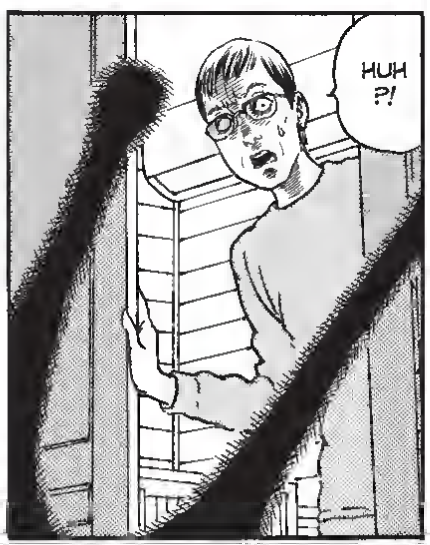
Question 4:

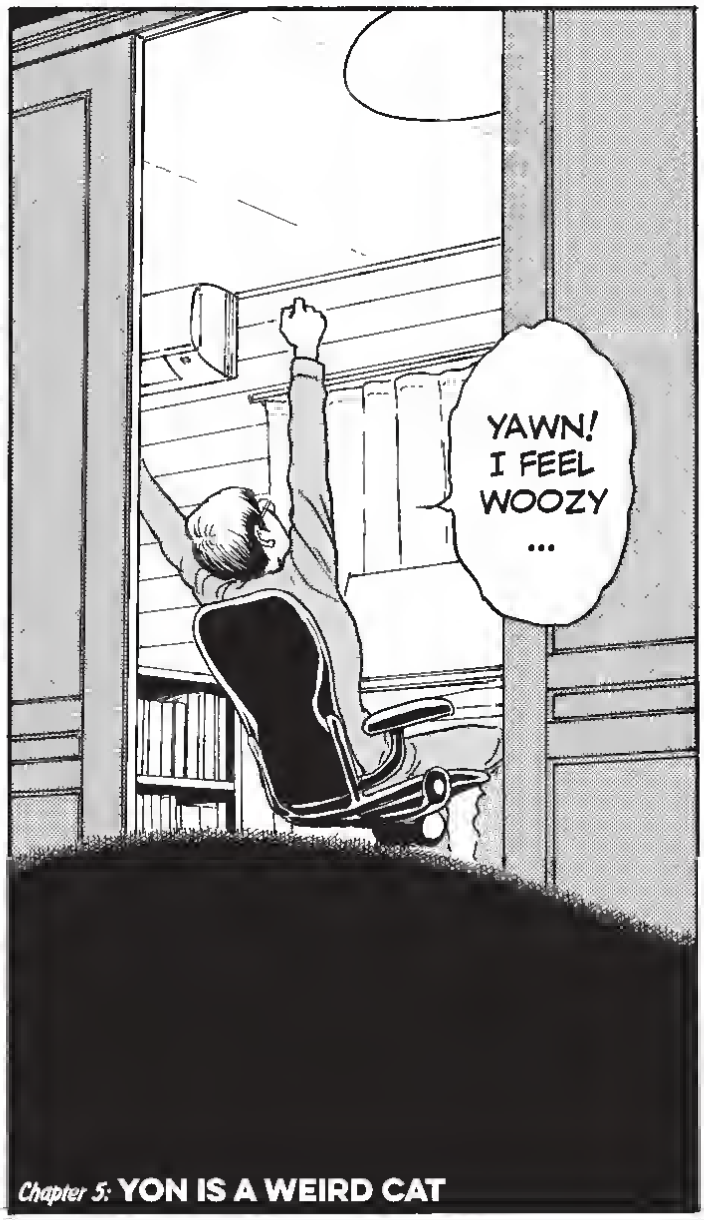
I hear that *Yon & Mu* has gotten quite a response from your family. What kind of feedback did you get?

Answer:

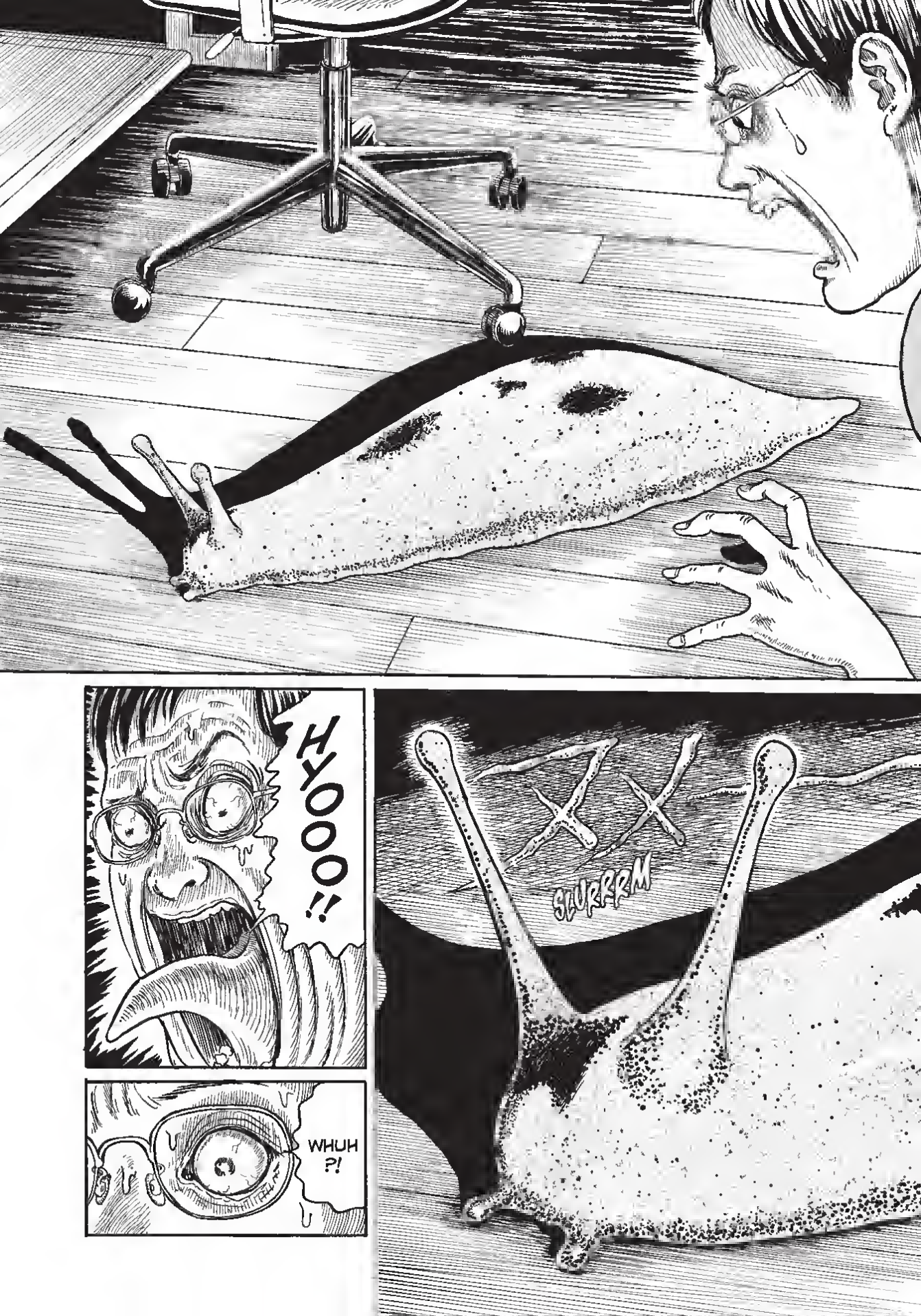
My wife gave me plenty of guidance about the personalities of the cats. She's also commented on my storyboards for me. My mother said, "It's quite a funny manga." My sister put in a request to include her longhair cat, Ran-chan (full name: Ran Purahachi Daruma Tsuchinoko Bandit Katsushin), into the manga, but there wasn't really space for it. Sorry.

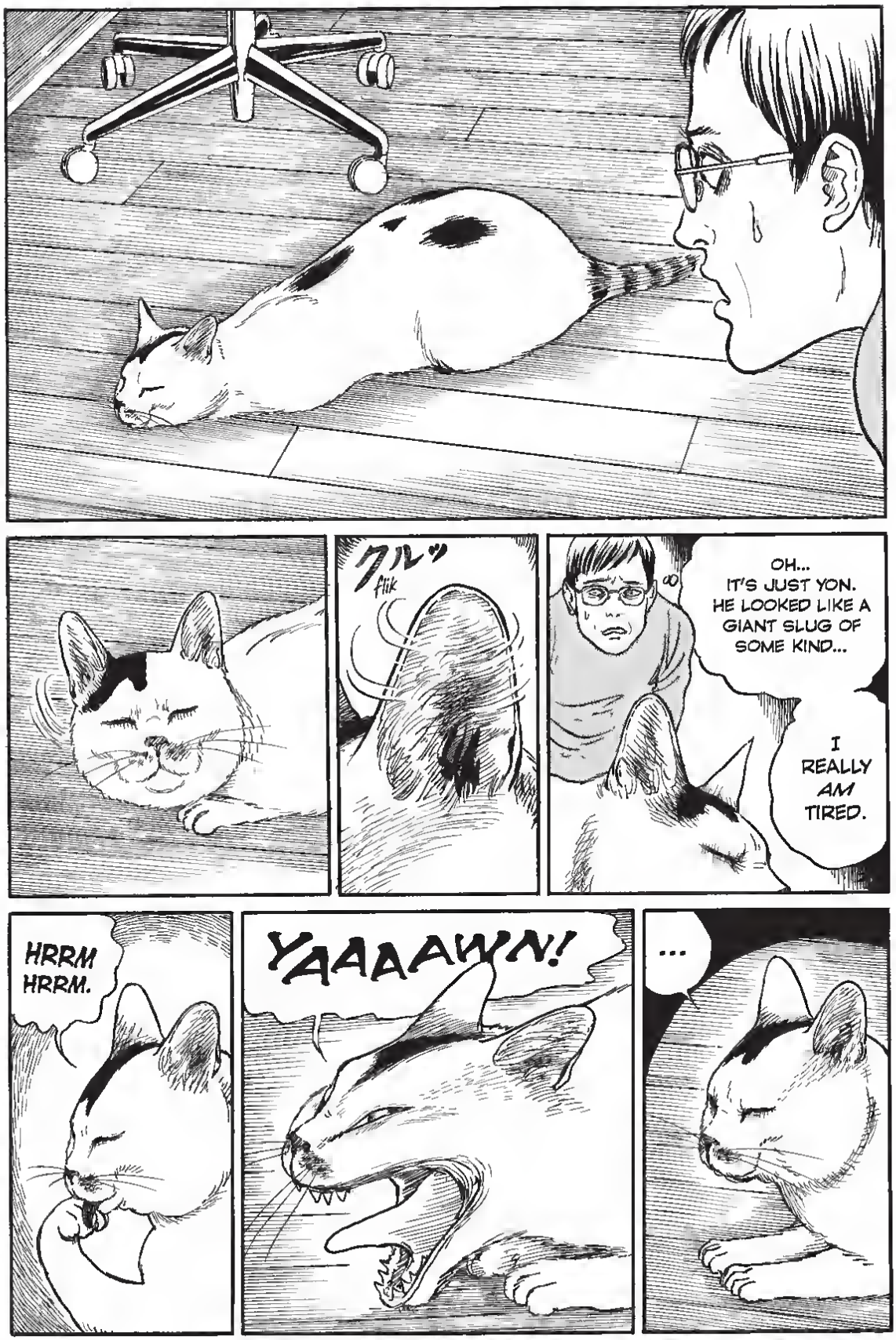


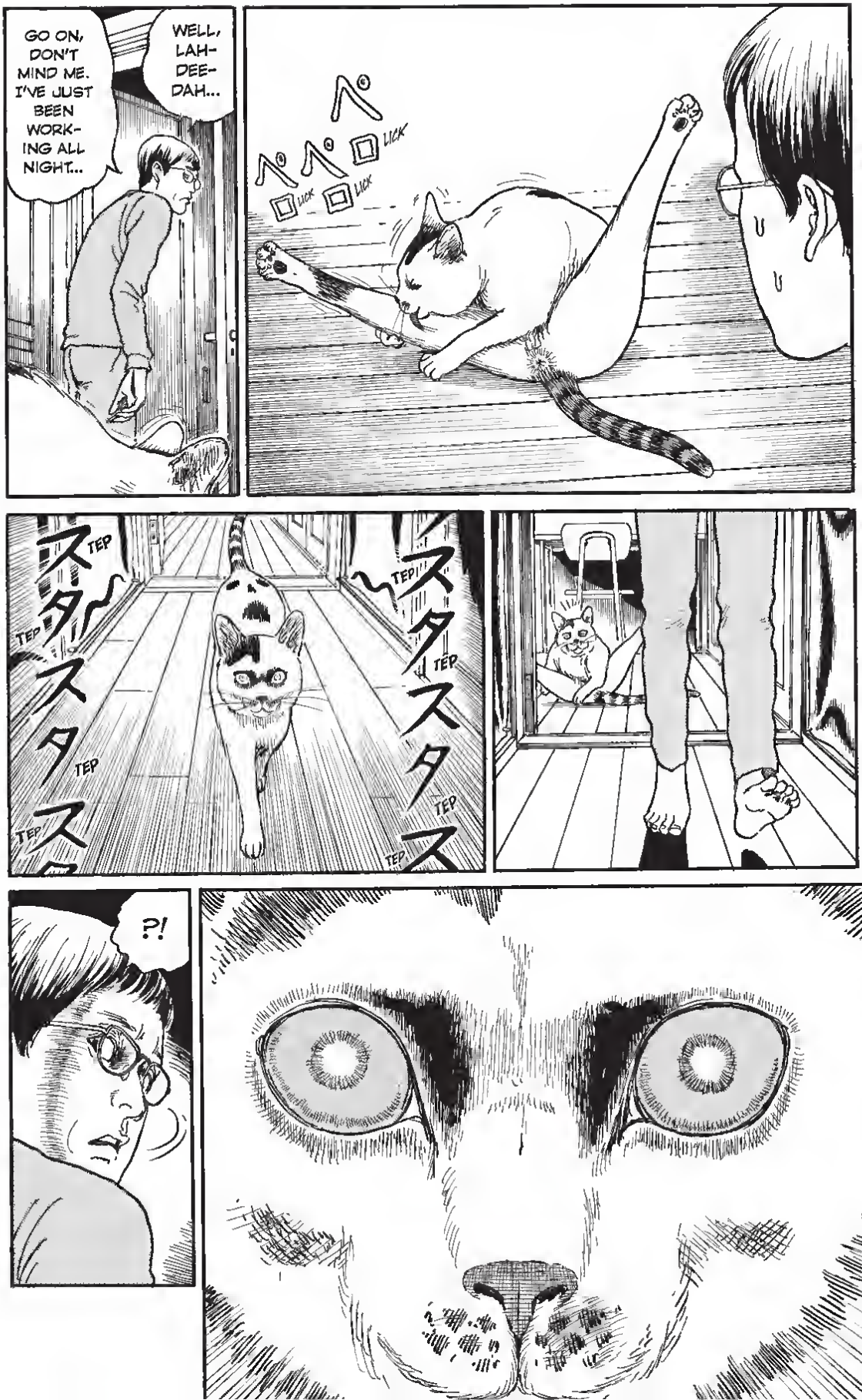




Chapter 5: **YON IS A WEIRD CAT**


HYOOO!!
WHUH?!
XX
SLURRRM


クルッ
Flik
OH... IT'S JUST YON. HE LOOKED LIKE A GIANT SLUG OF SOME KIND...
I REALLY AM TIRED.
HRRM HRRM.
YAAAAWN!
...


GO ON, DON'T MIND ME. I'VE JUST BEEN WORK-ING ALL NIGHT...
WELL, LAH-DEE-DAH...
ペ
ペペロ LICK
ロロ LICK
TEP
?!

SQUIRM
SQUIRM
SQUIRM
SQUIRM
EEEK!!

CATCH IT! HURRY !!
A-KO, THERE'S A TSUCHI-NOKO IN OUR HOUSE!
GASP! IT'S A TSUCHI-NOKO!!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? IT'S JUST YON.
A-KO, IT'S A TSUCHI-NOKO! A LEGENDARY MONSTER! WHAT A FIND!!
WHAT ARE YOU SHOUT-ING ABOUT, J-KUN? IT'S TOO EARLY.
MEOWWW
OH... ANOTHER HALLUCI-NATION...
WH-WHAT ...?

AH!!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'LL DO IF I START TO SEE MU AS A LION NEXT.
DAMN... I NEED TO FINISH THIS DRAFT SO I CAN SLEEP ...
SUCH A SWEET, ADOR-ABLE KITTY.
OH, GOOD. AT LEAST YOU'RE STILL GOOD OLD MU.
WHO'S A GOOD BOY?
PROWN
CHOMP
purrr
purrr

IS HE REALLY A CAT, EVEN?
THE PROB-LEM IS YON...
AH!
JUST WISH HE DIDN'T BITE SO HARD.
WELL, I CAN OVERLOOK THAT... HE'S CUTE IN THAT WAY ONLY A CAT CAN BE...
カリ
OH...
SOME OLD GUY WATCH-ING THE GAME...
WH-WHO'S THAT?!
MROW...
AH?
NEED TO RECU-PERATE.
カリ
カリ
カリ
WHAT I NEED NOW IS REST.
I AM REALLY TIRED...
OH, MAN...

ぴょん
BOING
MROW!
YON...
WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT ...?
WH-WHAT'S THIS...
クルン
FLOP
ブルン
purr

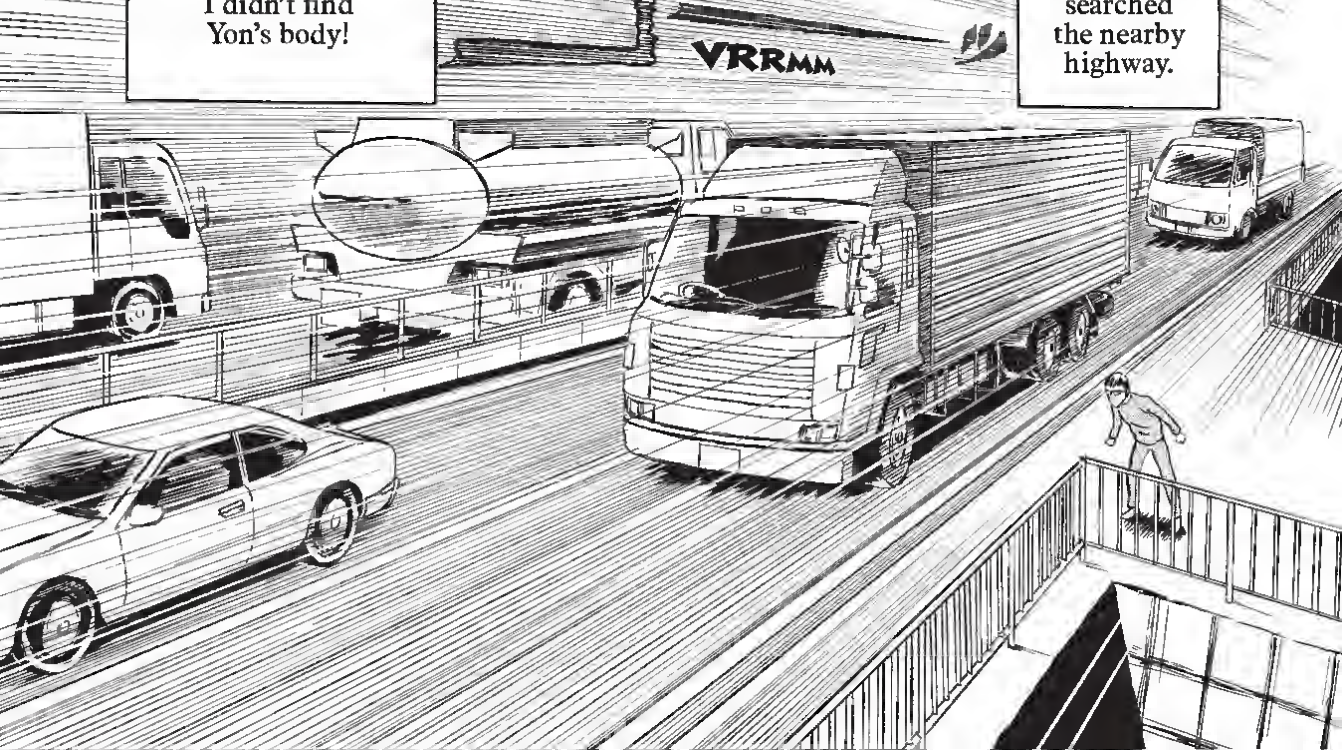
ブルン purr
ブルン purr
ブルン purr
ブルン purr
ブルン purr
The mood in that moment was, shall we say...very *intimate*...
...
A very strange time came to pass...
チュッ SUCK
It was the first time I was able to suckle Yon... a ritual that normally he only ever allowed A-ko to perform...
Yon's rough, bristly tongue warmly enveloped my tired pinky... Beating like a pulse, quiet but powerful.
Then again... maybe that was a hallucination, too...

Chapter 6: YON'S GREAT ESCAPE
…was brimming with curiosity, indeed!!
The cat with the weird face…
SHOOOP
HMM?
HAHA
J-KUN!!
カリカリ
カリカリ

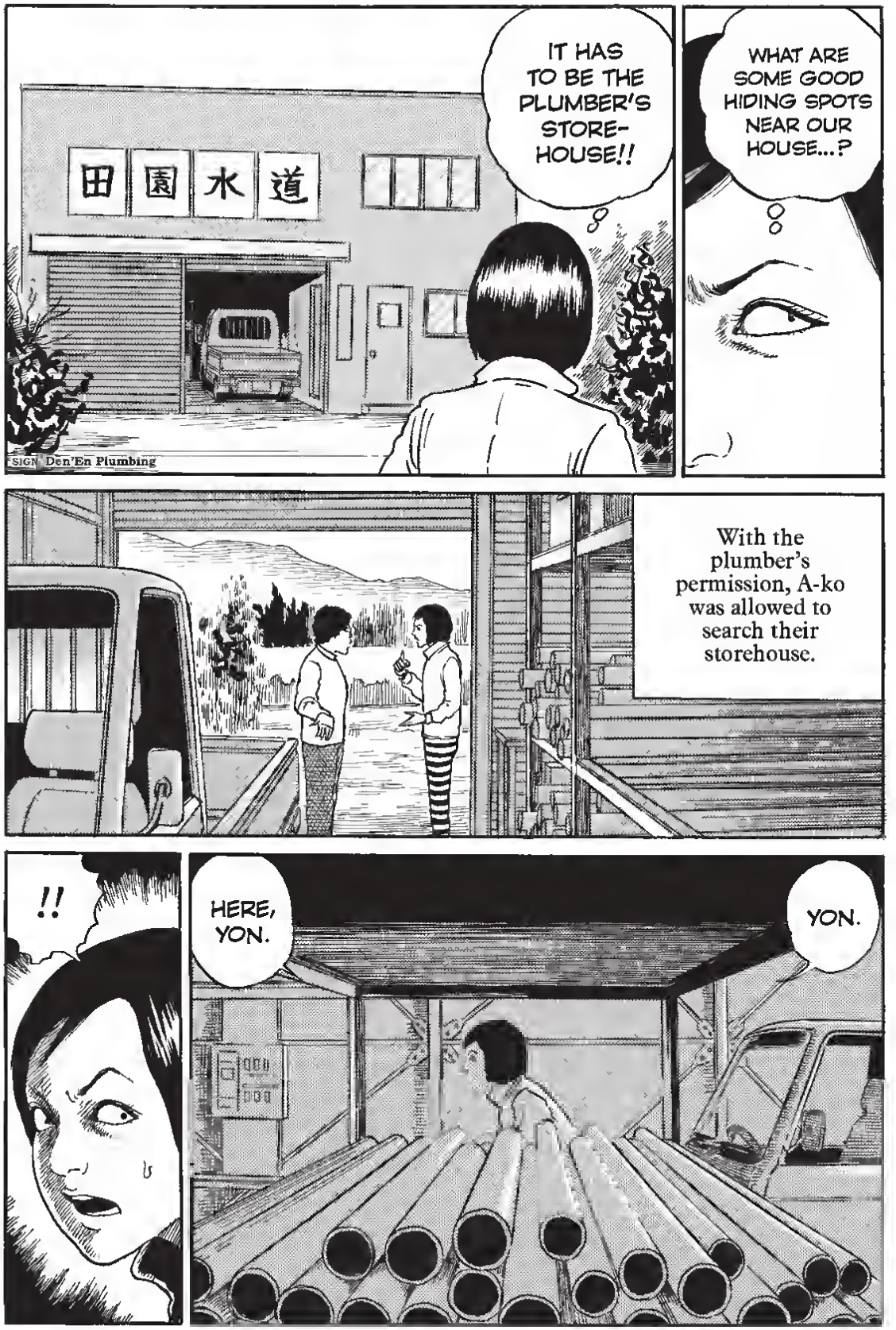
WH-WHAT ?!
HE GOT OUT !!
IT'S YON!
WHAT IS IT, A-KO?
HE MUST HAVE CLAWED THE SCREEN OPEN AND ESCAPED!!
THE WINDOW WAS OPEN AND THE SCREEN WAS JUST LOOSE AN INCH... I WASN'T PAYING ATTENTION!
...but Yon was long gone.
We quickly ran outside and looked around the house...
BY THE TIME I NOTICED, I SAW YON LEAPING FROM THE ROOF TO THE TOP OF THE FENCE.

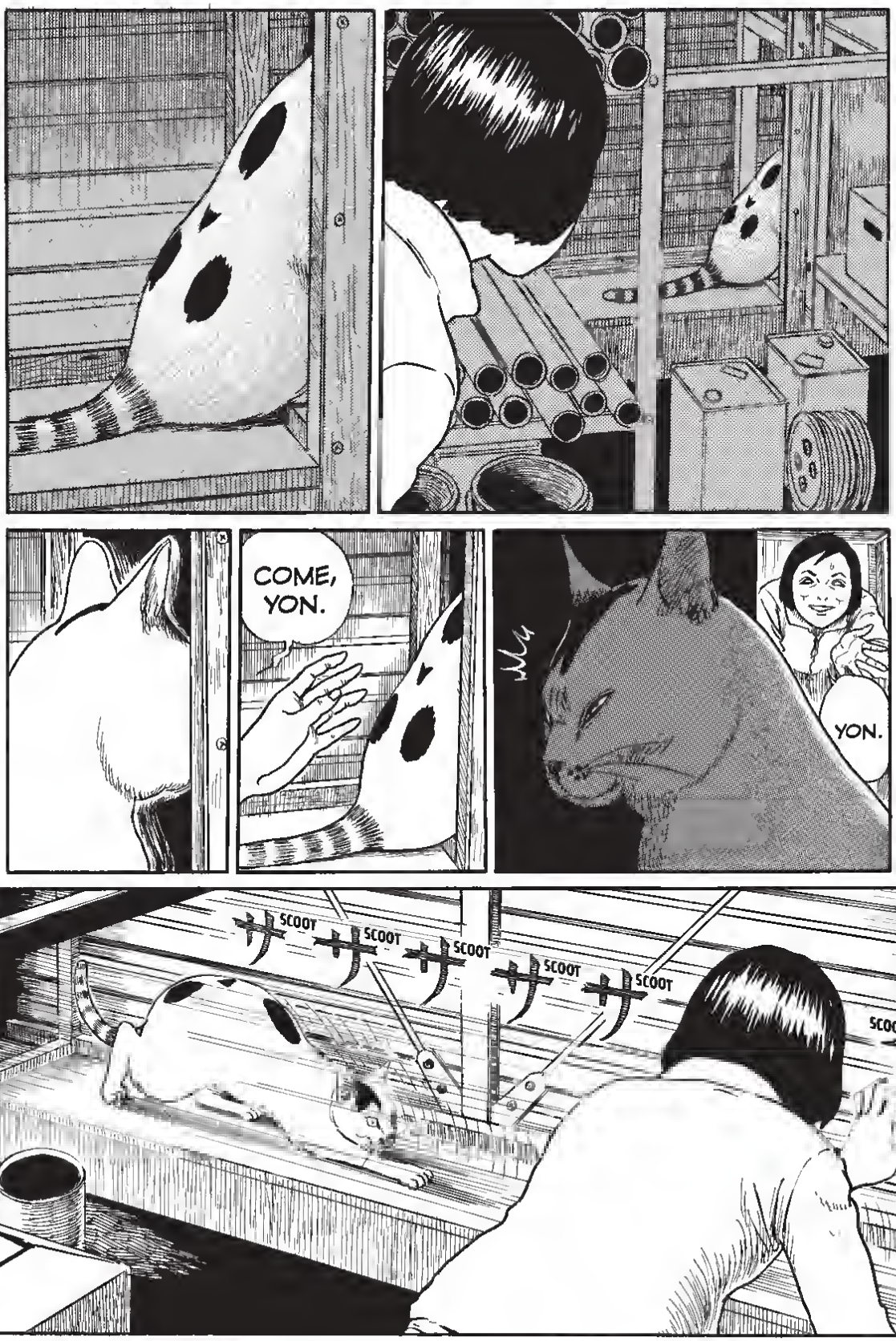
There's a dangerous highway nearby, and there's also the possibility of catching diseases from local stray cats.
VRRRMM
We never let our cats go outside.

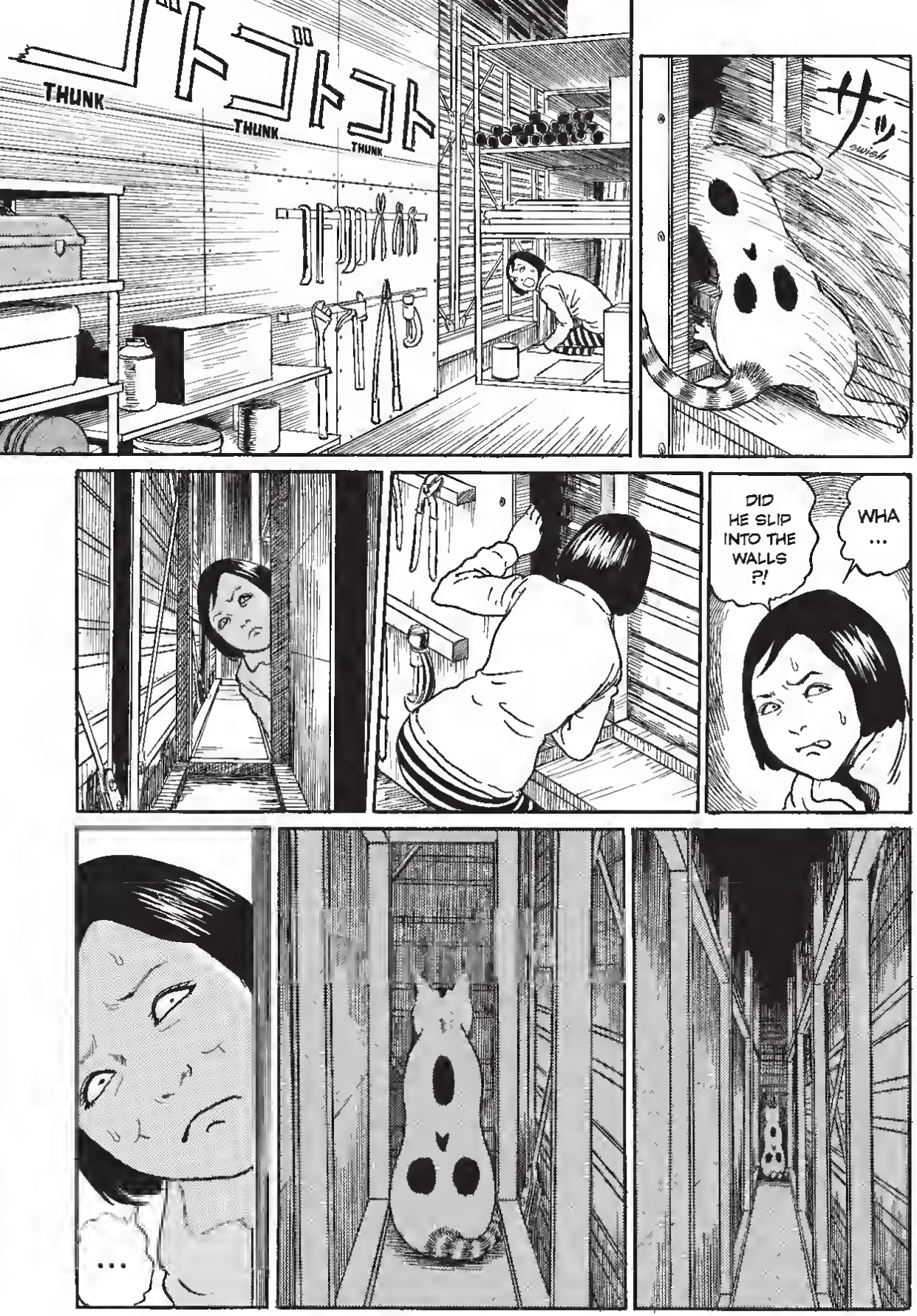
PROWW
THAT WAY, YON CAN RETURN ANYTIME.
KEEP MU CONFINED TO THE BEDROOM UPSTAIRS AND LEAVE THE FRONT DOOR OPEN!


Thankfully, I didn't find Yon's body!
VRRMM
I immediately searched the nearby highway.

Next, I headed to the rice paddies.
VRMMM
WE REALLY DON'T WANT HIM WANDERING AROUND HERE...
I'VE GOT TO FIND HIM SOON...
HE AIN'T BACK YET.
Mom
I returned home on occasion, but there'd been no news of Yon's return.
At some point, a local plumber joined the search.
She recalled the advice of some cat-finding expert.
CATS DON'T TRAVEL VERY FAR. HE'LL BE HIDING SOMEWHERE IN THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD...
While we were expanding our search radius, A-ko was employing a different plan of action.


IT HAS TO BE THE PLUMBER'S STORE-HOUSE!!
WHAT ARE SOME GOOD HIDING SPOTS NEAR OUR HOUSE...?
田園水道
SIGN Den'En Plumbing
With the plumber's permission, A-ko was allowed to search their storehouse.
!!
HERE, YON.
YON.


COME, YON.
YON.
SCOOT
SCOOT
SCOOT
SCOOT
SCOOT
SCOOT

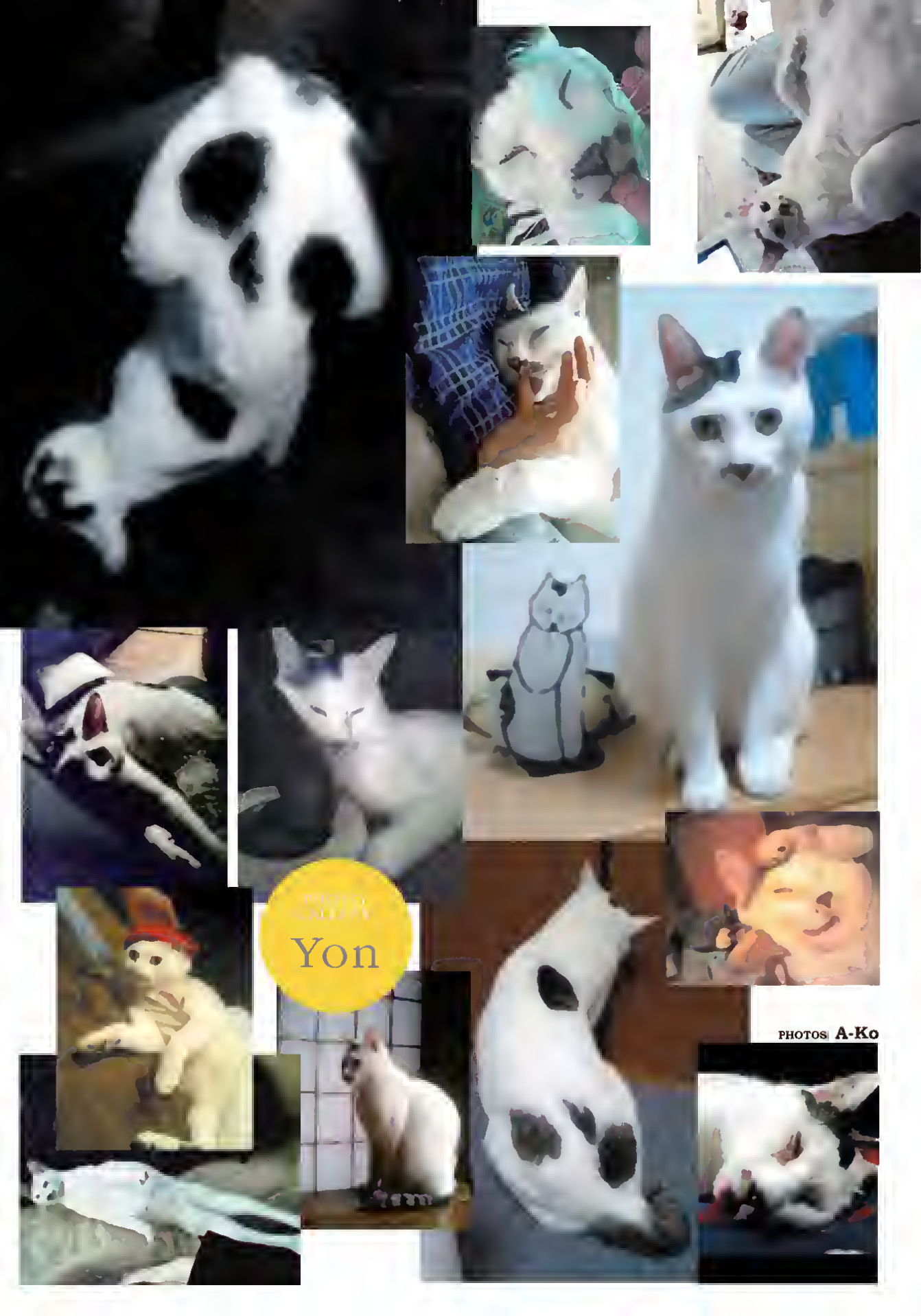

THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
swish
WHA ...
DID HE SLIP INTO THE WALLS ?!
...

But an hour passed by and A-ko still hadn't returned.
Thanks to the generosity of the plumbers, A-ko was allowed to hang out in the storeroom, trying to lure him out with food.
Thus began the war of attrition.
SO HE SQUEEZED HIMSELF BETWEEN THE WALLS? I'LL TRY BANGING ON THE WALL THEN.
Then the head plumber's son came to help.
HE STILL HASN'T COME OUT YET, A-KO?
WHAM!!
WHAM!!
WHAM!!
WHAM!!
WHAM
WHAM

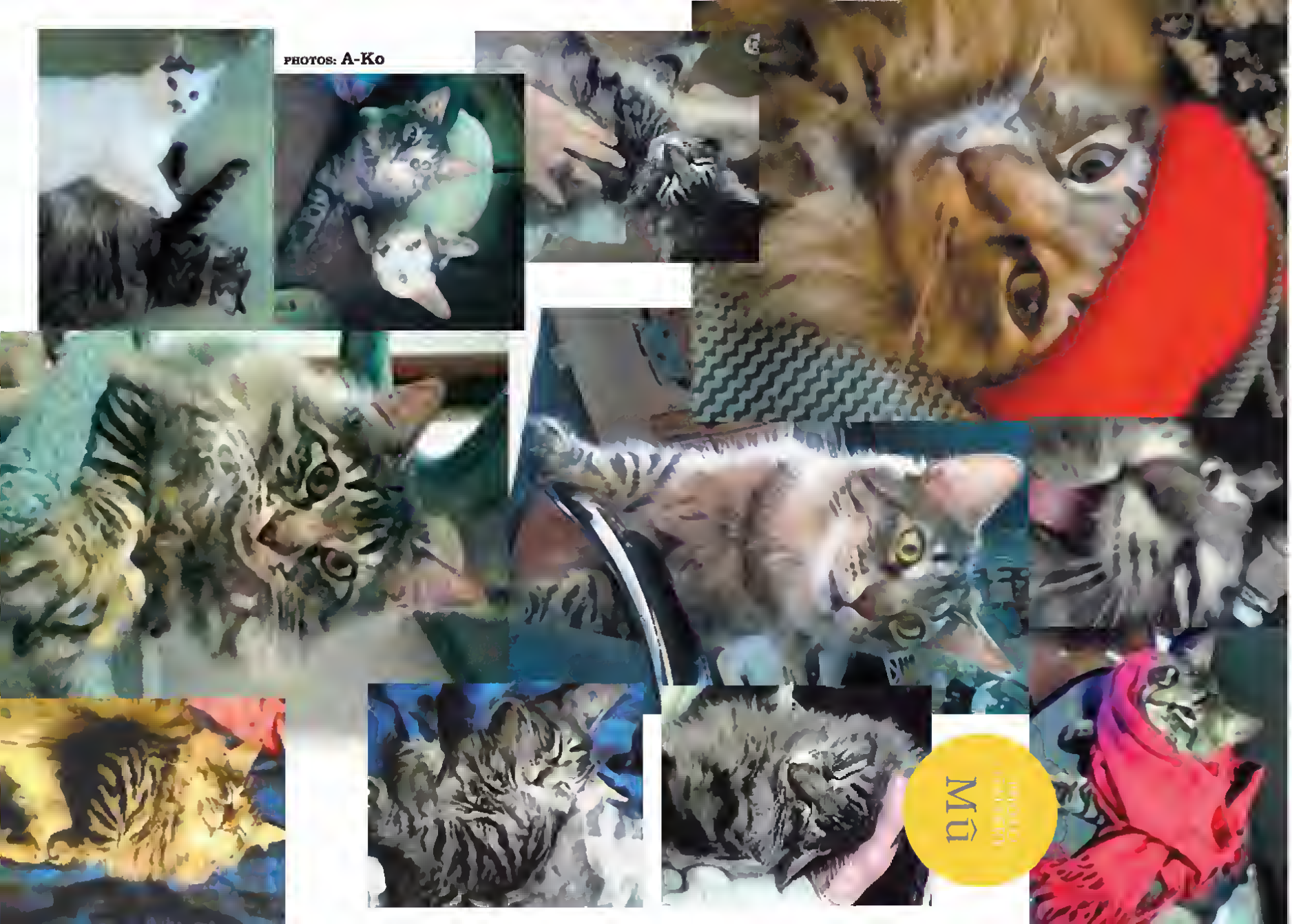
NO GOOD, EH...?
TELL YOU WHAT, I'LL REMOVE THE WALL THEN.
WHAT?! YOU SURE?!
GRUNNN
GRUNNN
GRUNNN
!!
THUNK
DSSHH

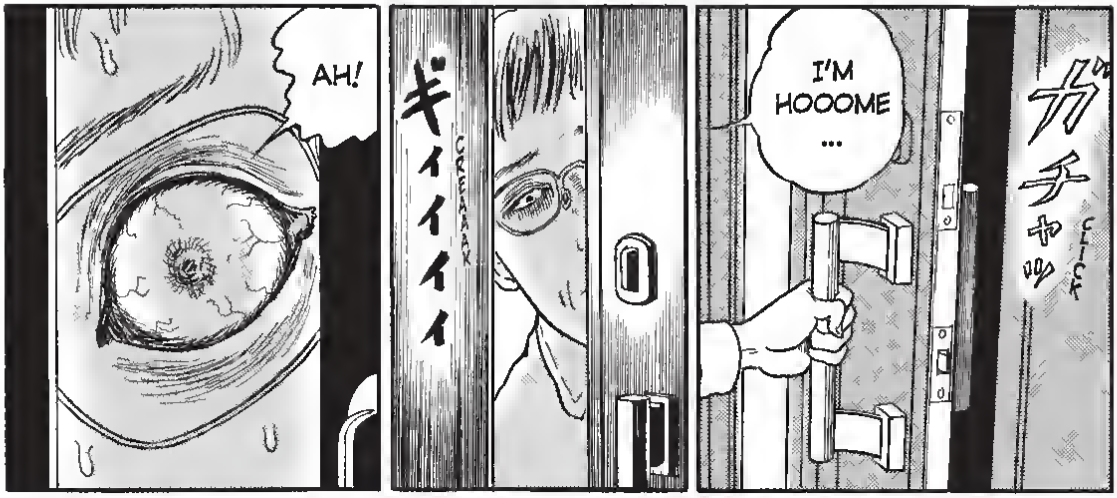
SNAG
TEP
TEP
TEP
TEP
GOTCHA!

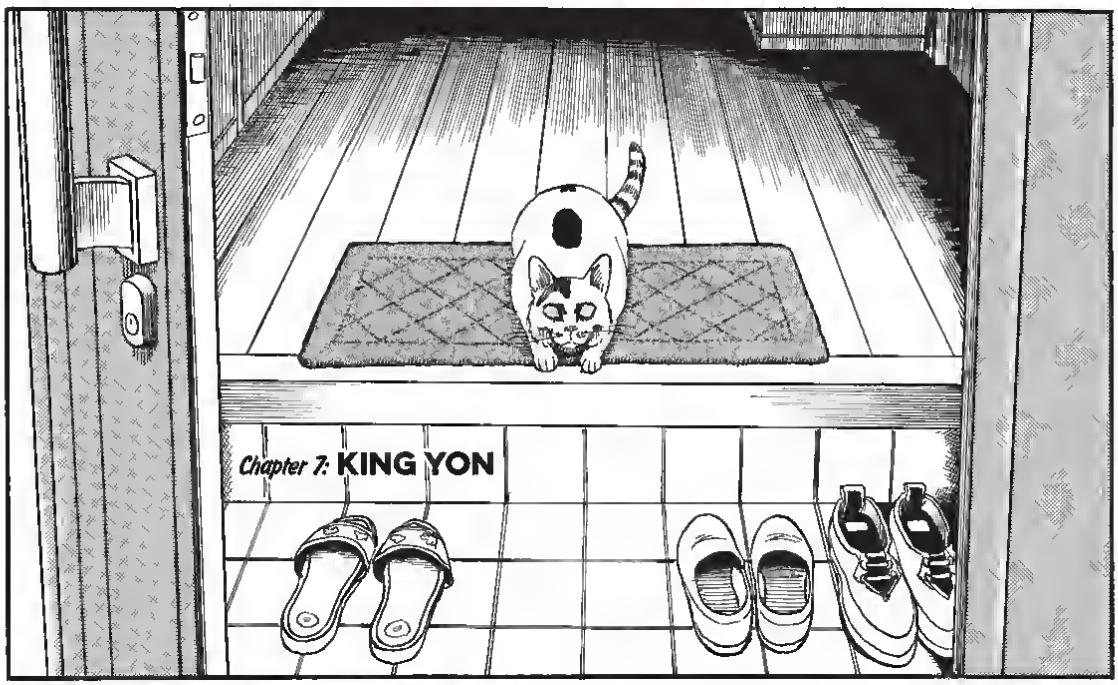
We're truly sorry for all the trouble we caused the plumber.
Thus, *Yon's Great Escape* ended in failure!!

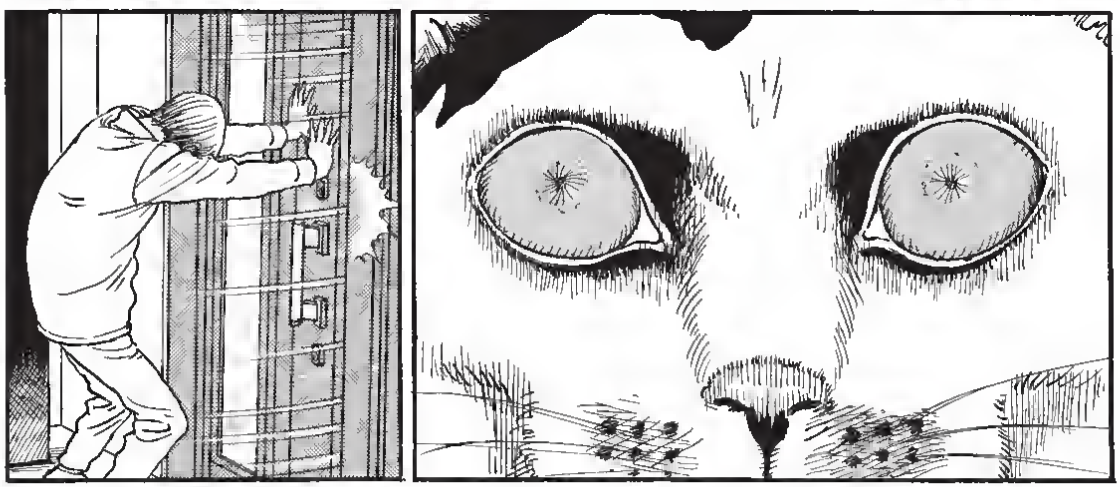


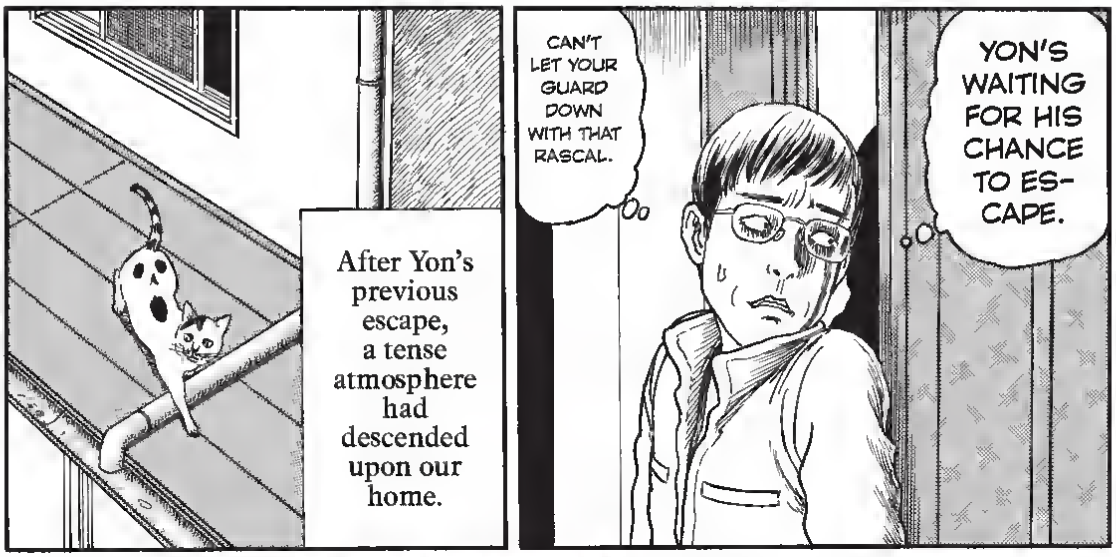
PHOTOS A-Ko

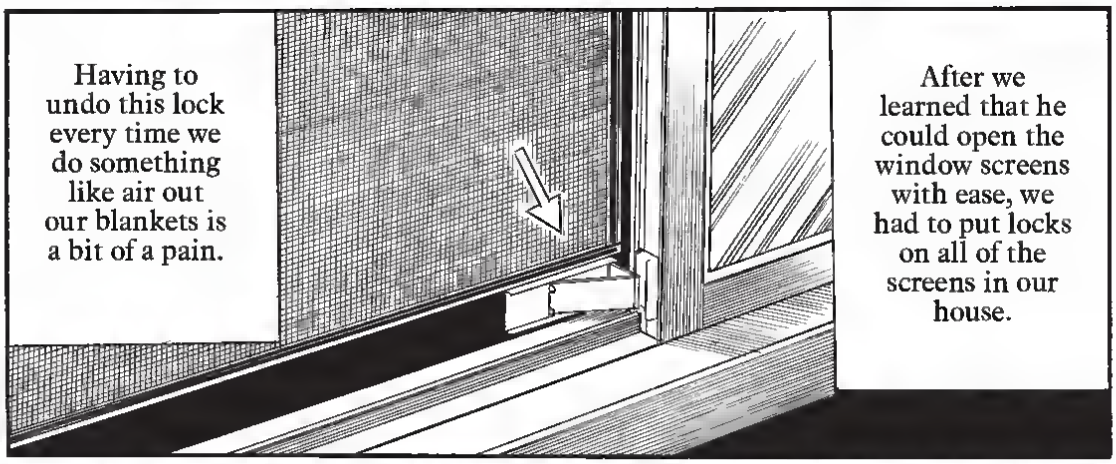

PHOTOS: A-Ko
Mū

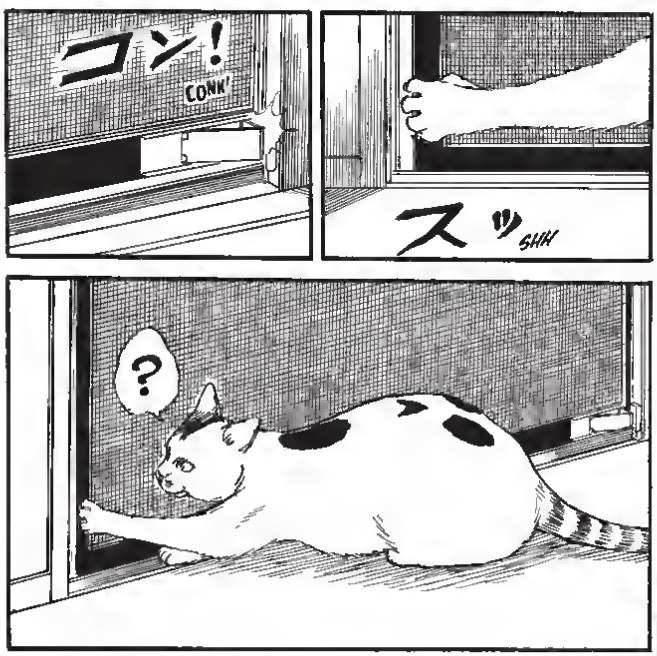

AH!
ギィイイイ
CREAAAK
I'M HOOOME ...
ガチャ
CLICK


Chapter 7: KING YON




After Yon's previous escape, a tense atmosphere had descended upon our home.
CAN'T LET YOUR GUARD DOWN WITH THAT RASCAL.
YON'S WAITING FOR HIS CHANCE TO ESCAPE.

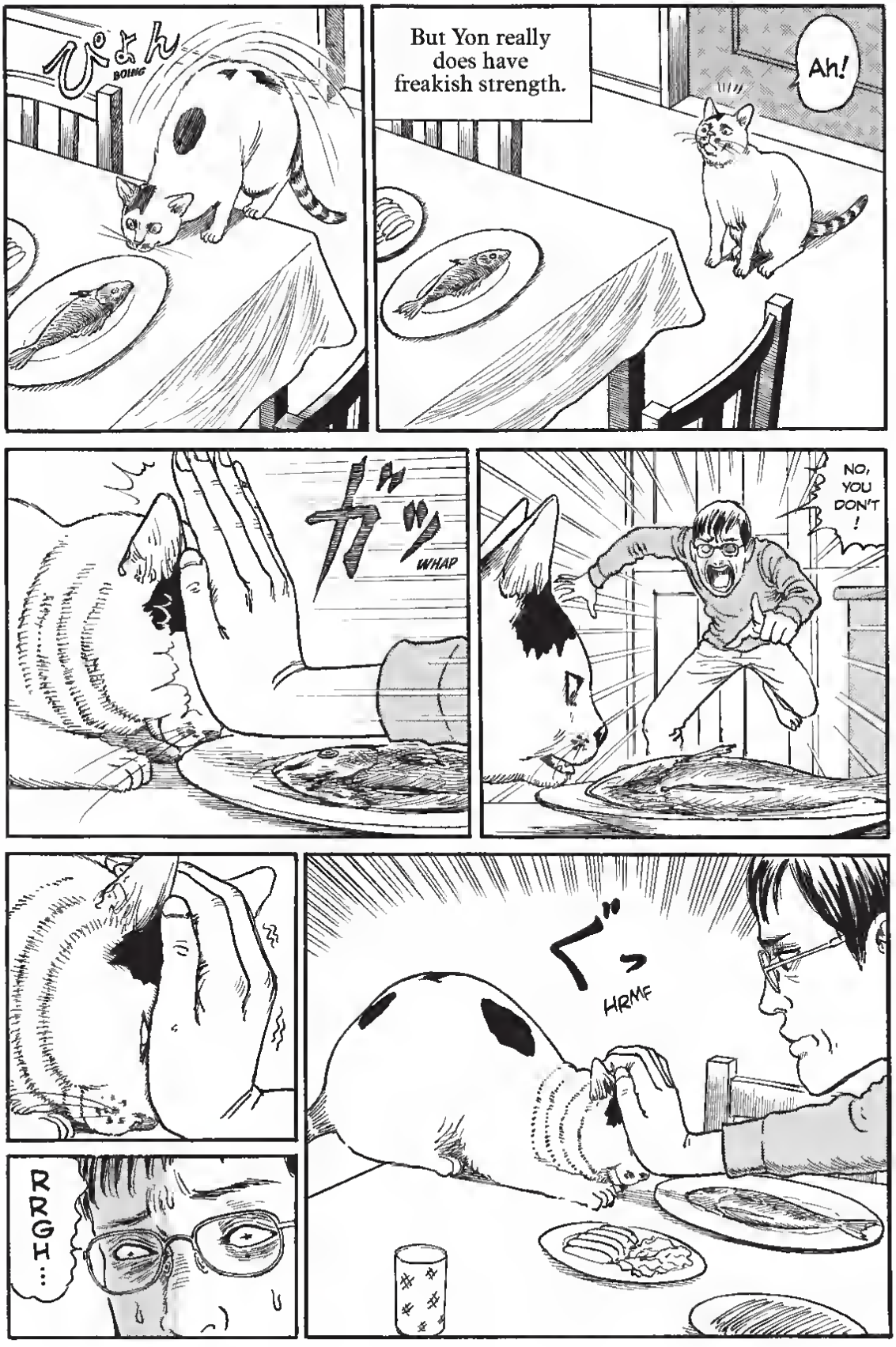

Having to undo this lock every time we do something like air out our blankets is a bit of a pain.
After we learned that he could open the window screens with ease, we had to put locks on all of the screens in our house.

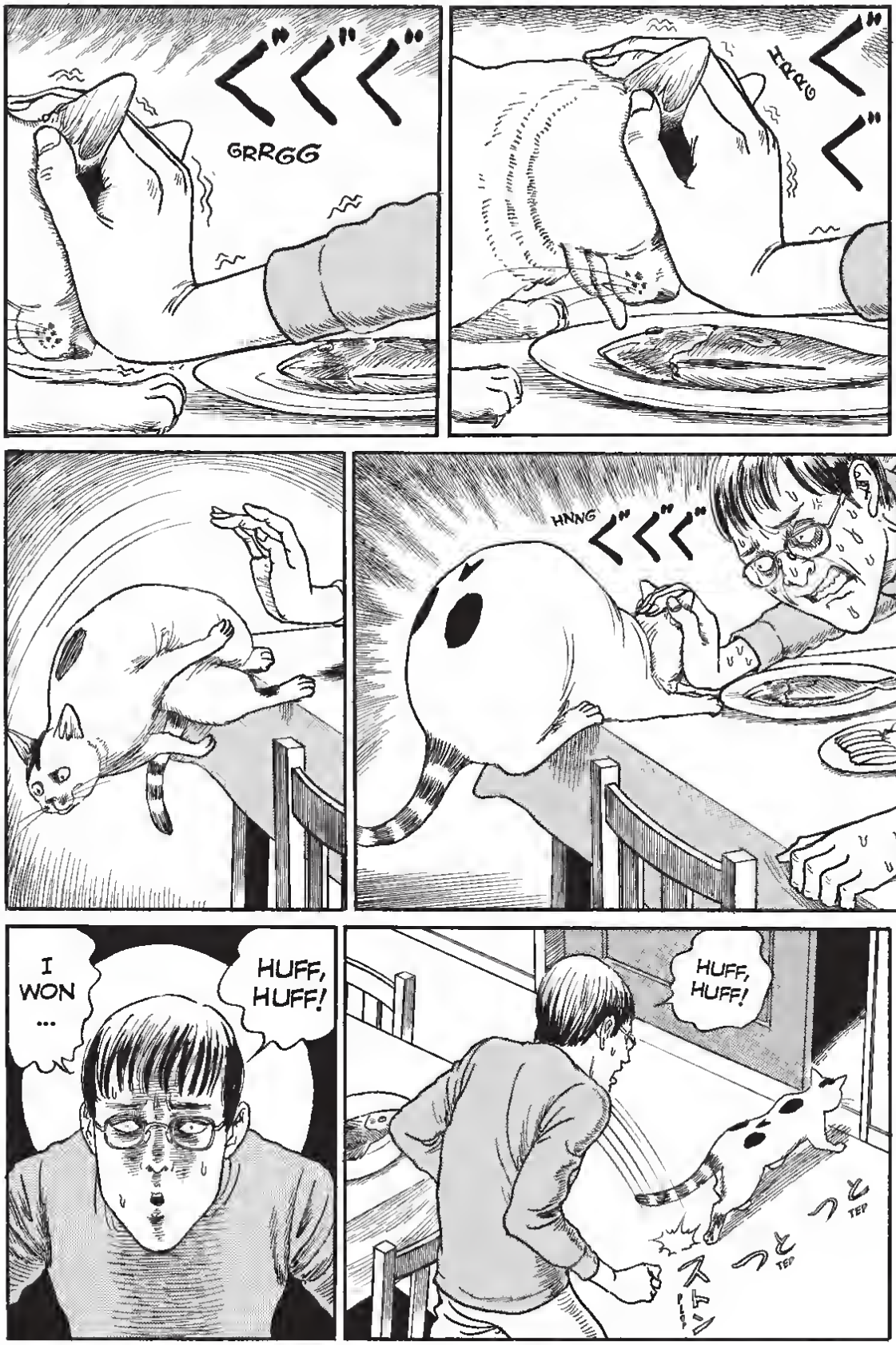

コン!
CONK!
ス
SHH
?

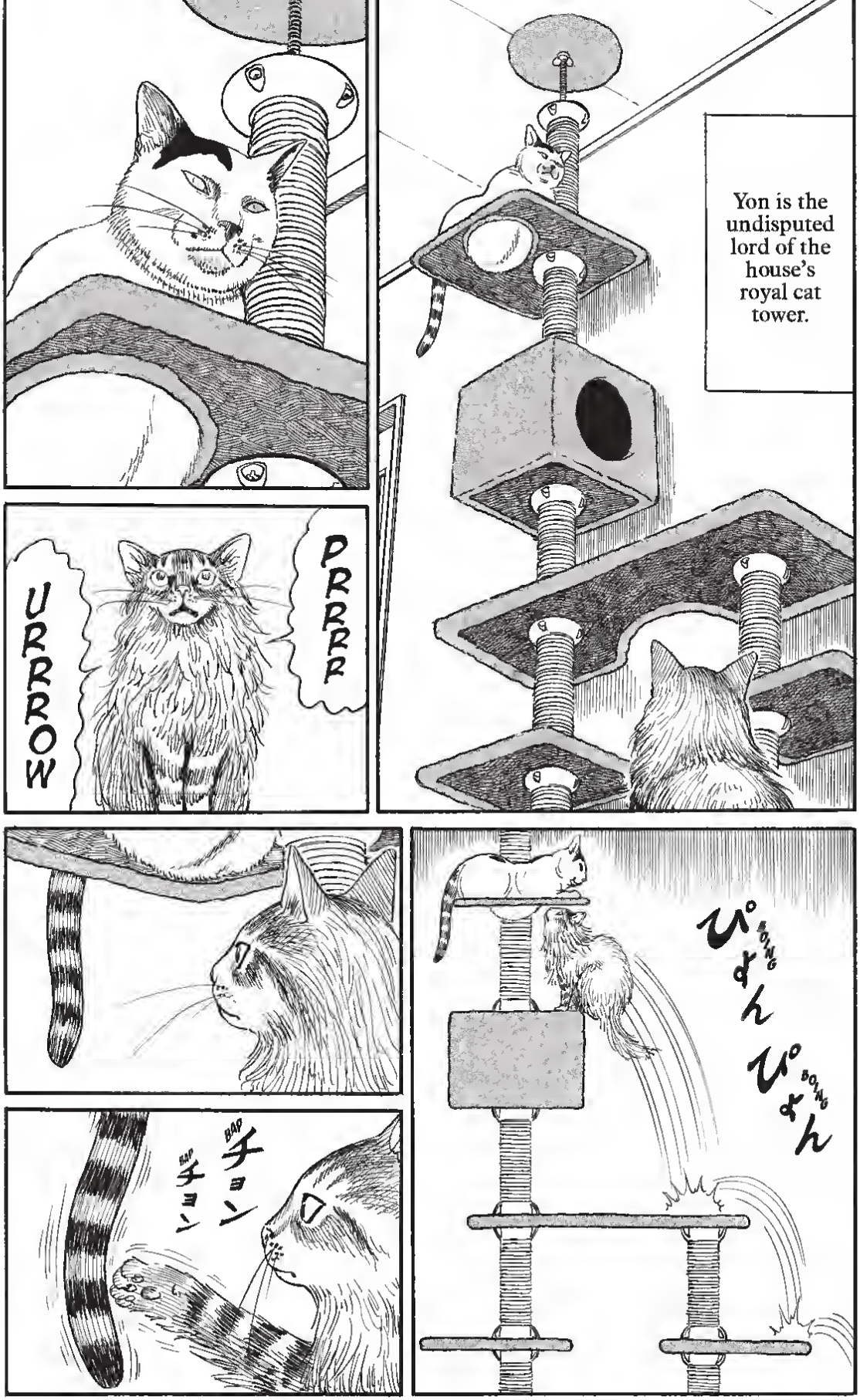
MU DOESN'T TRY TO ESCAPE, BECAUSE HE'S NEVER KNOWN THE TASTE OF FREEDOM IN HIS LIFE.
ON THE OTHER HAND...
YON ESCAPED FROM A-KO'S PARENTS' HOME SEVERAL TIMES...
???
HE'S TASTED THE AMBROSIA OF THE GREAT OUT-DOORS!
URRRR...
GOOD BOY.
YOU'RE JUST A PRECIOUS, INNOCENT LITTLE KITTY.
PRRR
CHOMP
GAH!

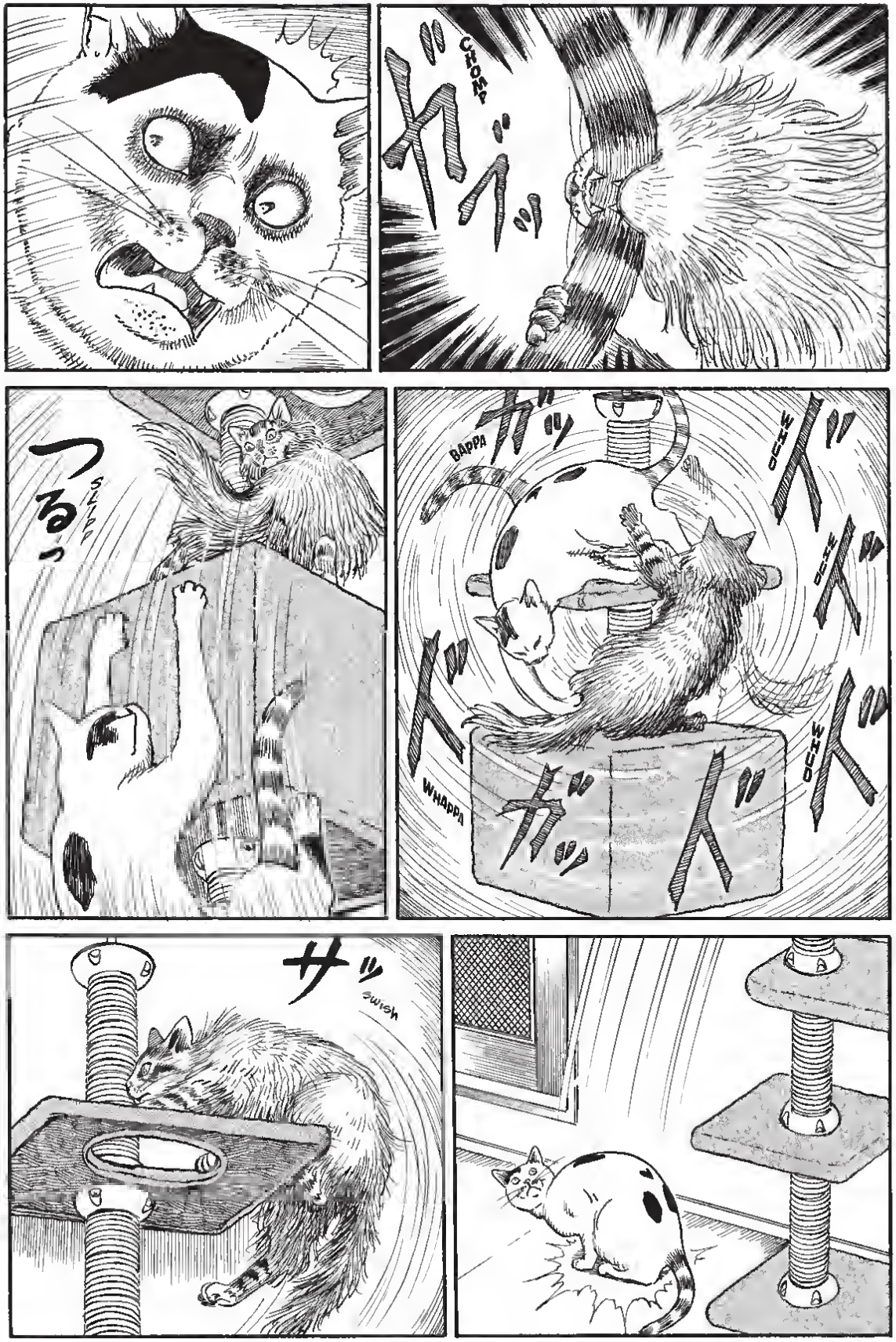
WHAT A LOVELY DAY.
WHAP
WHAP
ガッ
GAKK
HMM?
AAH!
ギュー
HRRRG
ガッ
GAKK

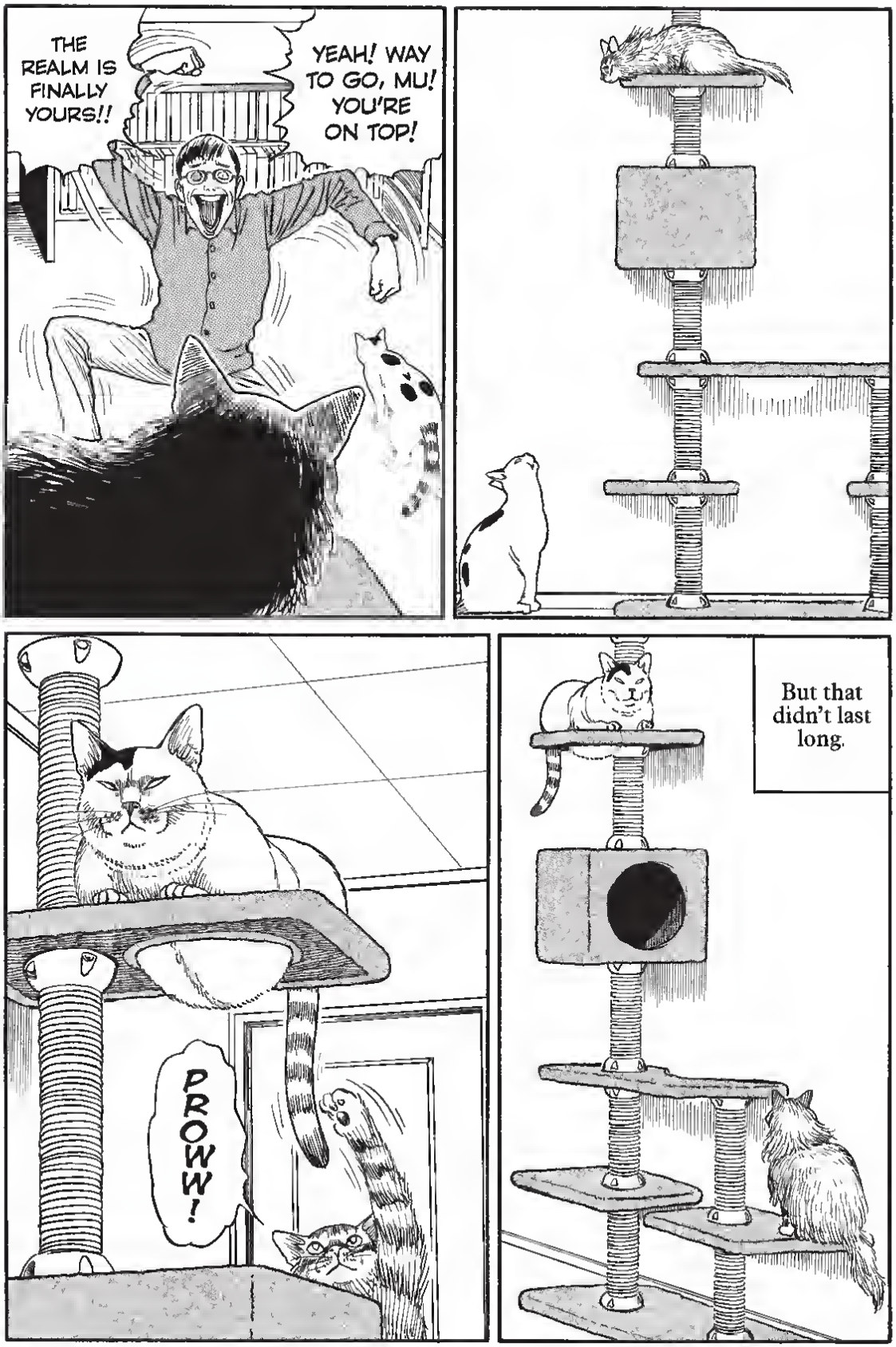
I CAN'T BELIEVE HE PRIED OPEN THAT HEAVY SLIDING DOOR...
WHAT KIND OF MONSTROUS STRENGTH DOES THAT CAT HAVE?
NOW WE CAN'T EVEN HANG UP OUR BLANKETS TO AIR OUT!
WHAT ?!
J-KUN! YON CLAWED THE SLIDING DOOR OPEN!!
WHAP
ピシッ
THAT SHOULD DO IT!
I quickly applied magnetic strips to all of the sliding doors and door frames.
Stuck to the top of the door frame
By the way, those magnetic strips were eventually replaced by special metal fixtures.
SHAK
ガリッ
ガリッ
SHHH
MUCH BETTER ...
ガリ
ガリ
ガリ
HEH HEH HEH ...

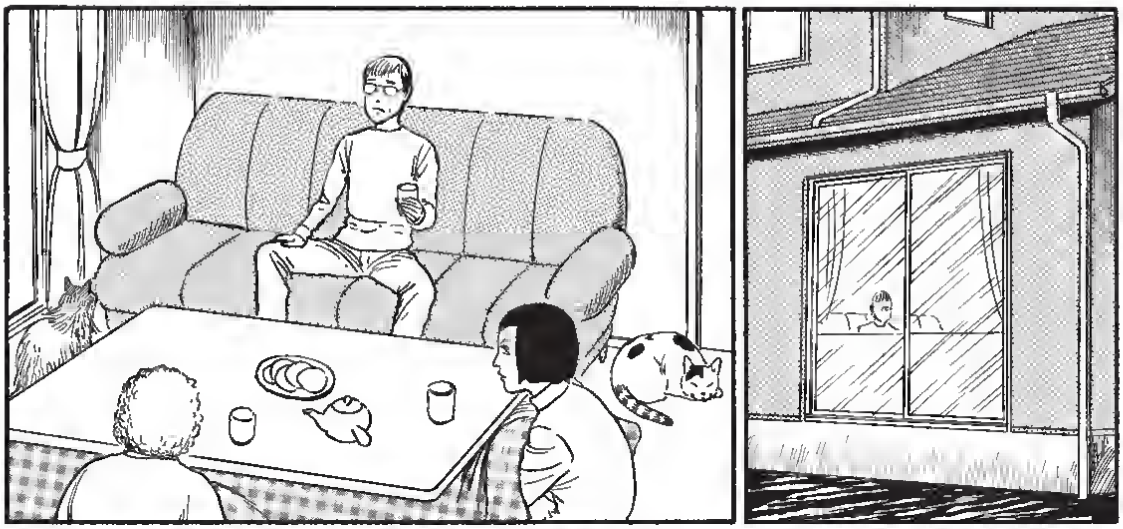

ぴょん
BOING
But Yon really does have freakish strength.
Ah!
ガッ
WHAP
NO, YOU DON'T!
ぐっ
HRMF
RRGH...

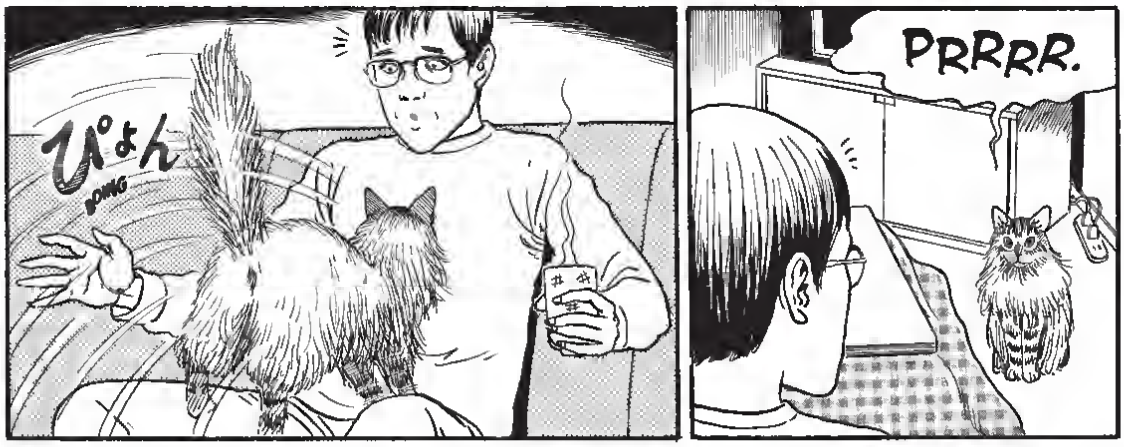

GRRGG
HNNG
I WON ...
HUFF, HUFF!
HUFF, HUFF!
TEP
TEP
TEP

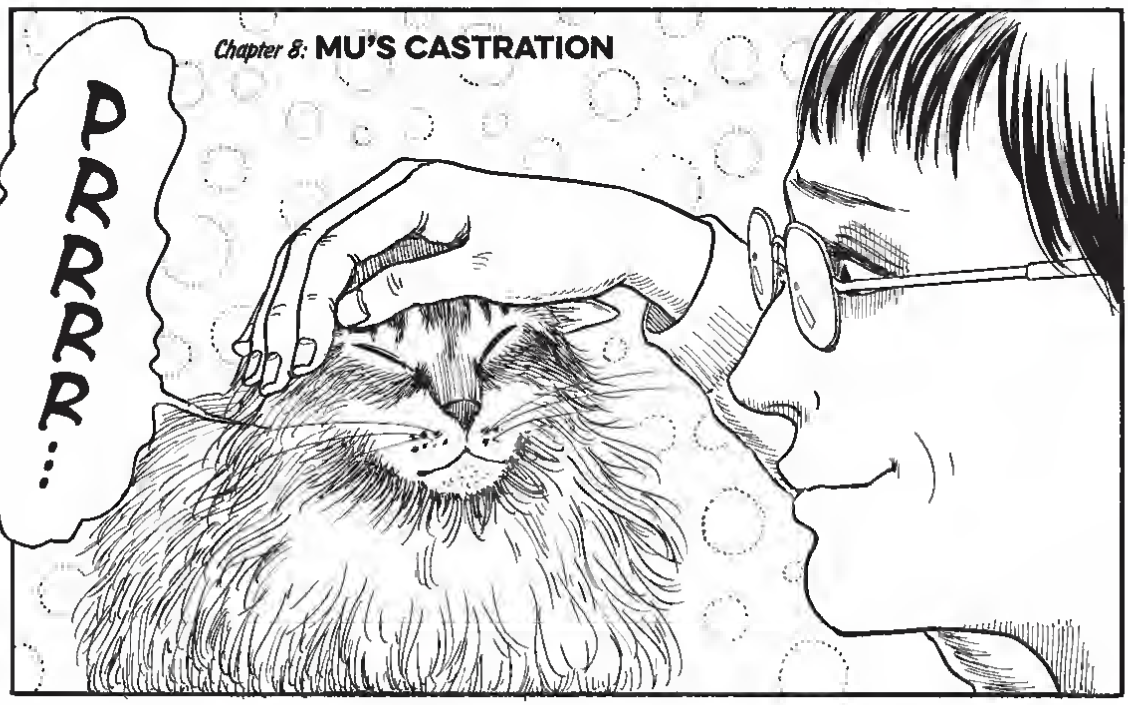

Yon is the undisputed lord of the house's royal cat tower.
PRRRR
URRROW
ぴょん BOING
ぴょん BOING
BAP チョン
BAP チョン

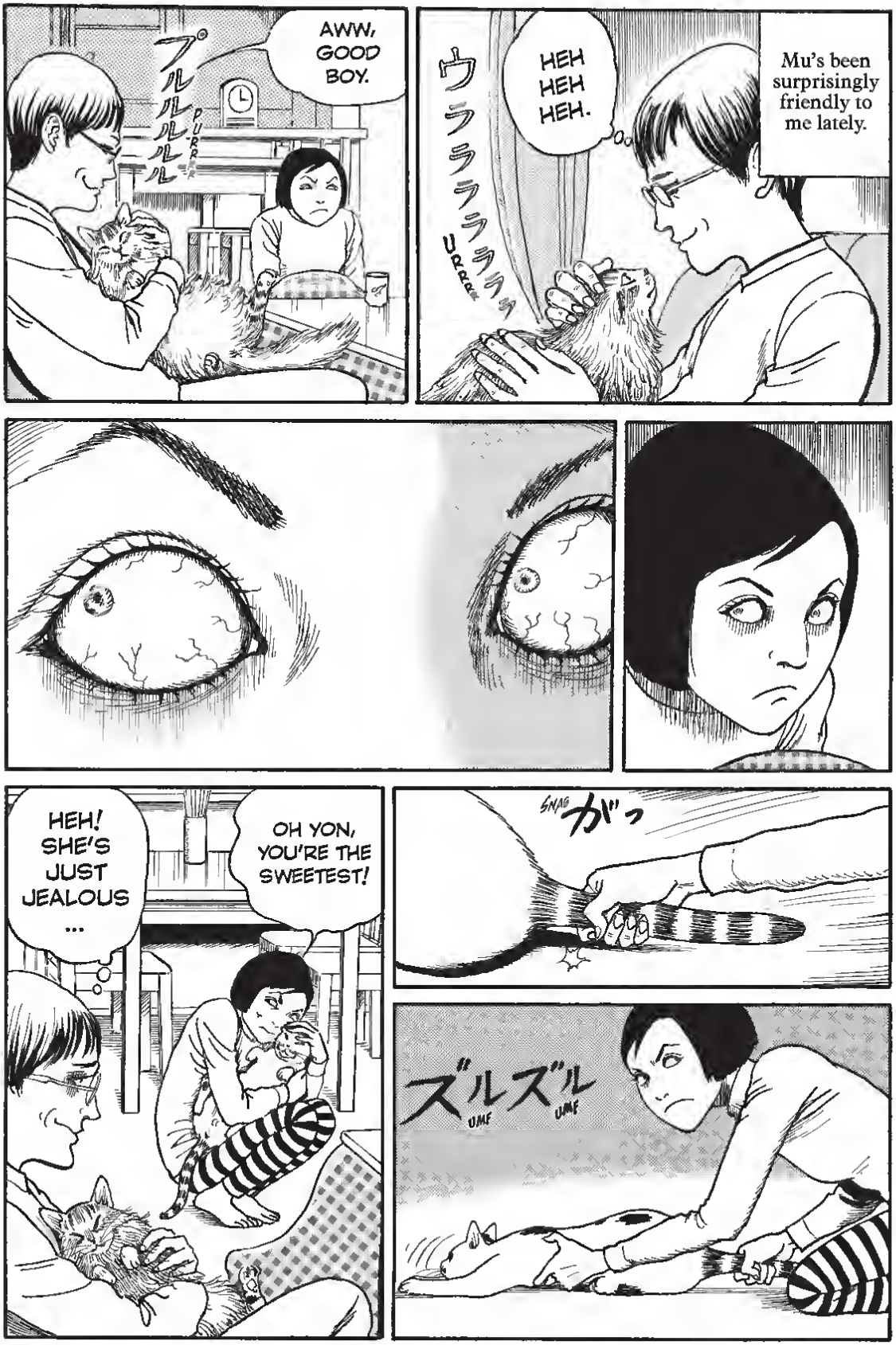

CHOMP
BAPPA
WHAPPA
SWISH


THE REALM IS FINALLY YOURS!!
YEAH! WAY TO GO, MU! YOU'RE ON TOP!
PROWW!
But that didn't last long.

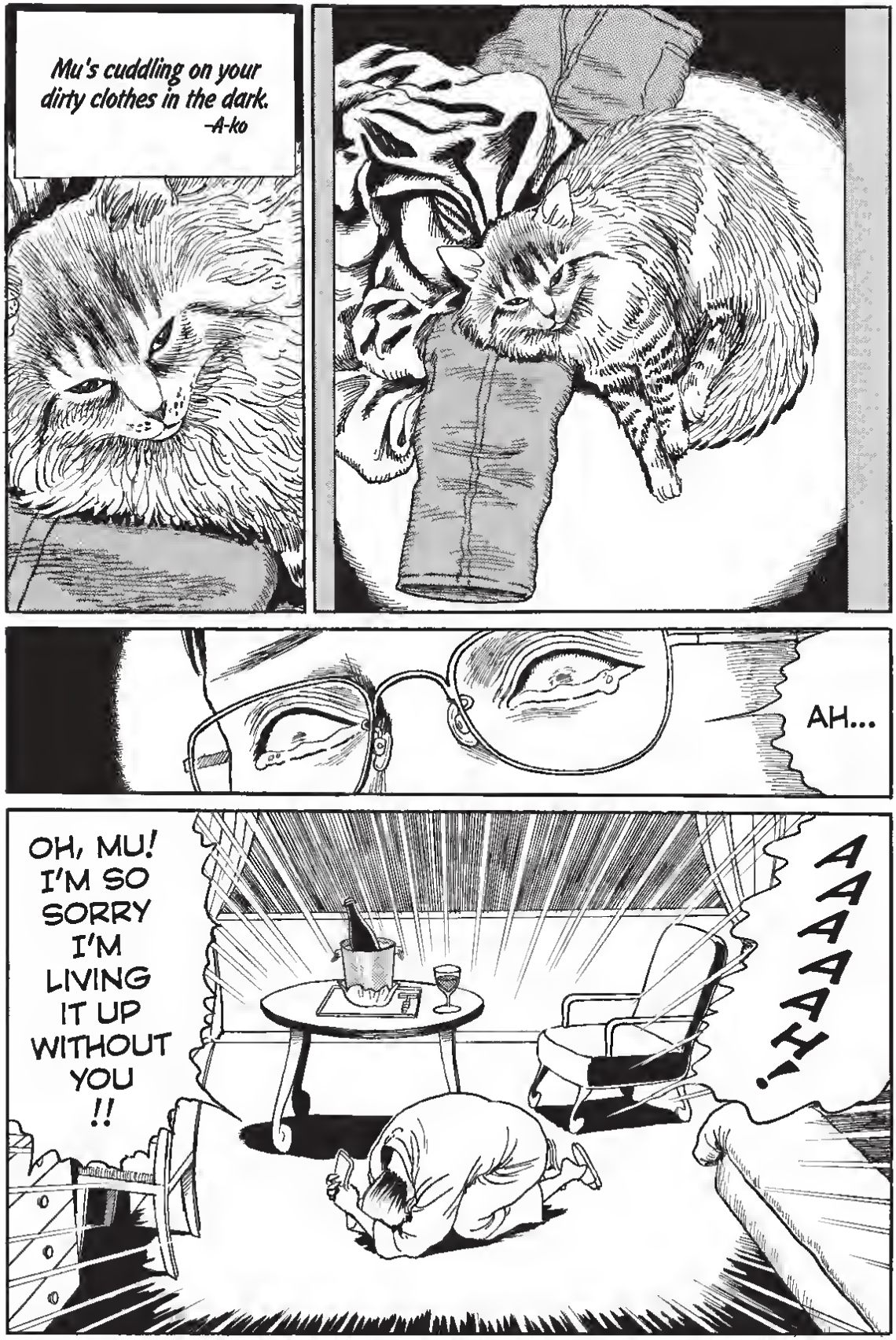



ぴょん
PONG
PRRRR.

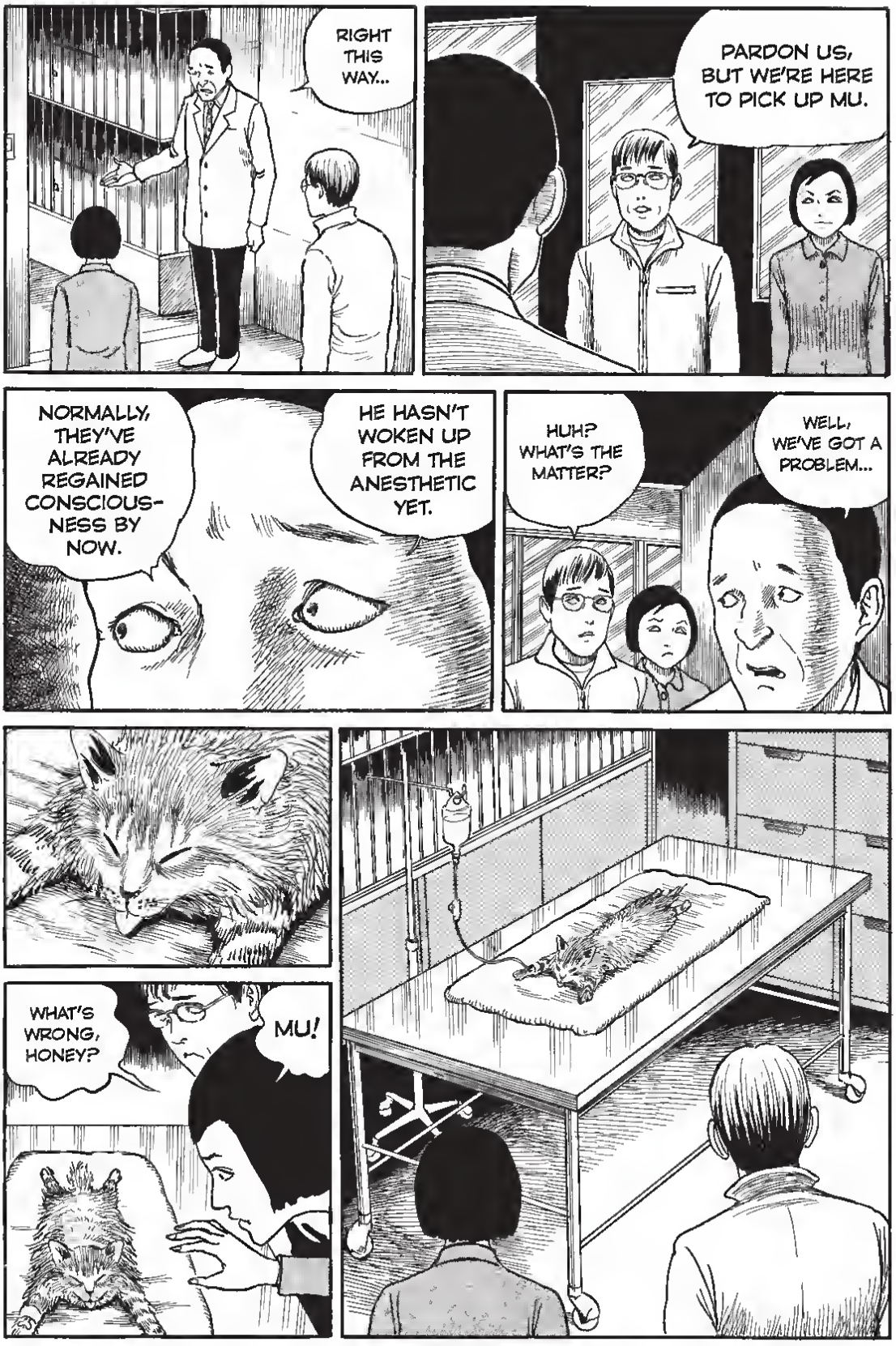

Chapter 8: MU'S CASTRATION
PRRRR...


プルルルルル
PURRR
AWW, GOOD BOY.
ウラララララ
URRRR
HEH HEH HEH.
Mu's been surprisingly friendly to me lately.
HEH! SHE'S JUST JEALOUS ...
OH YON, YOU'RE THE SWEETEST!
SNAG
がっ
ズルズル
UMF
UMF

The company put me up in a really fancy hotel room.
One day, I visited Tokyo for a work-related reason.
シャ
HUH?
HMM ?
HEH HEH... A-KO WAS SO JEALOUS OF THE PICTURE I SENT HER.
PROBABLY OF HER BEING JEALOUS.
OH? IT'S A TEXT FROM A-KO WITH A PICTURE.
メール
PHONE text A-ko


Mu's cuddling on your dirty clothes in the dark.
-A-ko
AH...
OH, MU! I'M SO SORRY I'M LIVING IT UP WITHOUT YOU !!
AAAAAH!

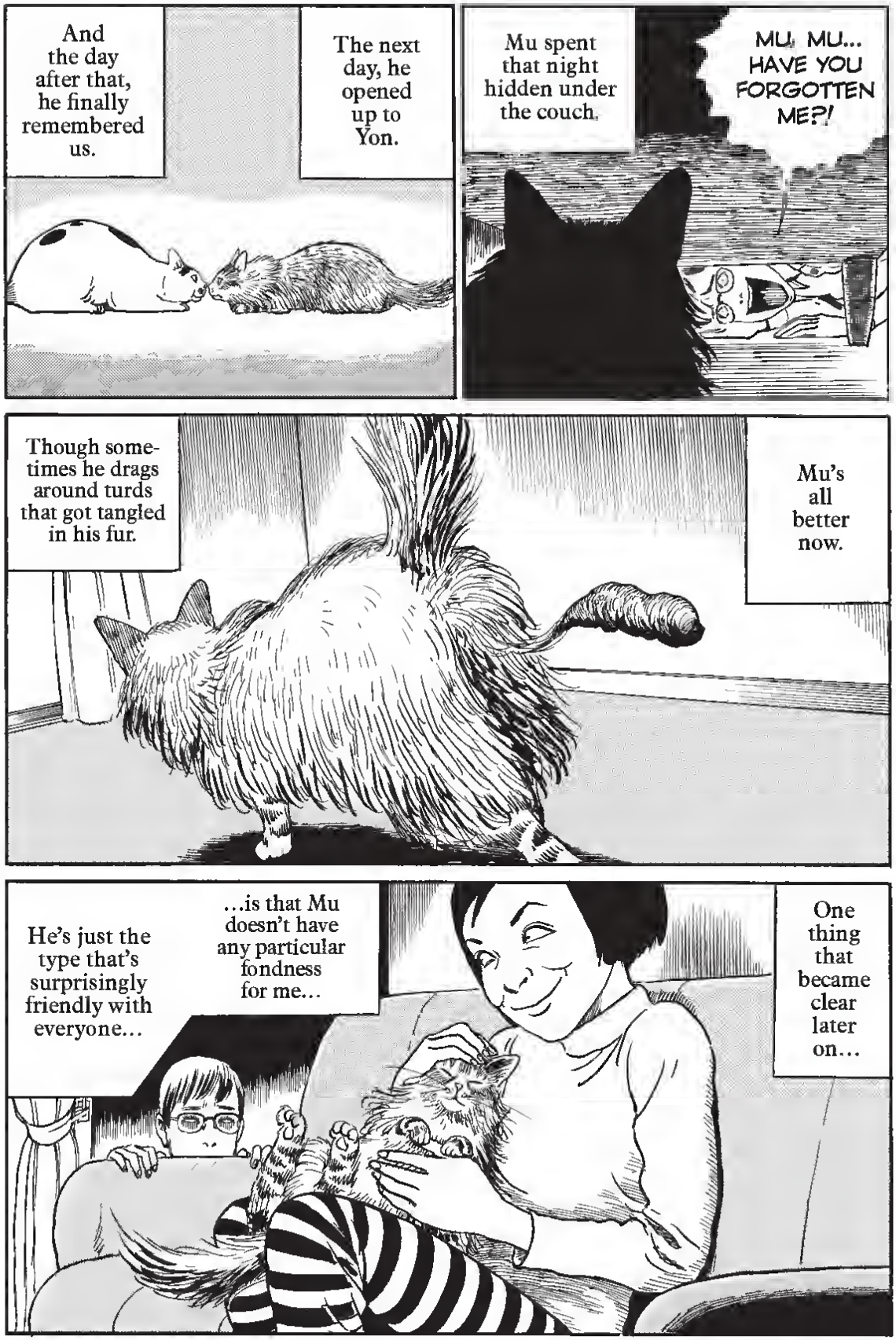
HE'S IN YOUR HANDS, DOCTOR.
We took the furry critter to a veterinary hospital in town.
友愛動物病院
Eventually, the time came to have Mu neutered.
SIGN: Yuai Animal Hospital
WE'LL BE BACK THIS EVENING, MU.
I HOPE THE PROCEDURE WENT WELL.
After a restless day, we headed back to the hospital that evening.


RIGHT THIS WAY...
PARDON US, BUT WE'RE HERE TO PICK UP MU.
NORMALLY, THEY'VE ALREADY REGAINED CONSCIOUS-NESS BY NOW.
HE HASN'T WOKEN UP FROM THE ANESTHETIC YET.
HUH? WHAT'S THE MATTER?
WELL, WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM...
WHAT'S WRONG, HONEY?
MU!

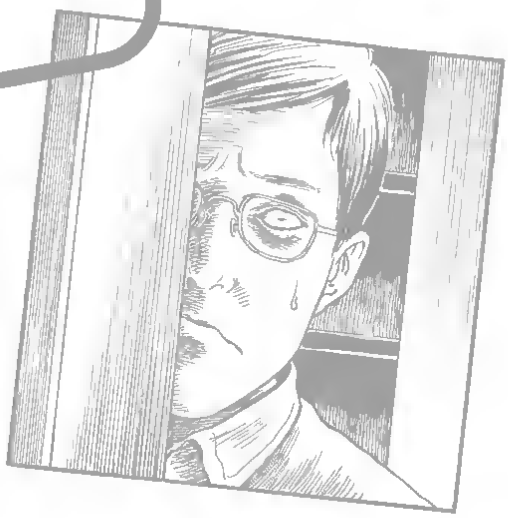
LET US KEEP HIM OVERNIGHT TO MONITOR HIS CONDITION.
SOME CATS RESPOND LIKE THIS FROM TIME TO TIME.
SEE HOW HIS TONGUE IS STILL WHITE? IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE HE'LL WAKE UP JUST YET...
BUT WHY?!
HE ISN'T GOING TO JUST PASS AWAY LIKE THAT, IS HE?!
WILL MU EVER WAKE UP FROM THE ANES-THESIA?

SINCE HE'S THE FAMILY'S SIXTH CAT.
I'VE GOT IT— HIS NAME IS "MU."
MU...
MU...
AW, HE'S SO CUTE.
PRRR...
NO, MU'S JUST TOO LAID BACK TO GET IT.
YOU'RE PRETTY BAD AT THAT.
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO DIE, ARE YOU ?!
MU...
MU...
MU...

COME INSIDE ...
The next day ...
ウィーン
MEOWWW.
NOW YOU CAN TAKE HIM HOME.
AFTER WATCHING HIM ALL NIGHT, HE'S FINALLY RECOVERED.
Once we got back home, he ran wild throughout the house, tracking pee everywhere.
On the drive home, he peed in his cage and became drenched in his own urine.
After the shock of the operation, Mu had forgotten us, and was terrified.
MYOWW
MYOWW


And the day after that, he finally remembered us.
The next day, he opened up to Yon.
Mu spent that night hidden under the couch.
MU, MU... HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN ME?!
Though sometimes he drags around turds that got tangled in his fur.
Mu's all better now.
He's just the type that's surprisingly friendly with everyone...
...is that Mu doesn't have any particular fondness for me...
One thing that became clear later on...

Question for you, J-SENSEI!



Question 5:

You draw A-ko's eyes almost entirely without pupils. What does your wife think of this?

Answer:

She got mad at me. It seems that she doesn't like the haircut, either. I've also been instructed to remove unnecessary lines from her cheeks in a number of panels. Additionally, she pointed out that A-ko's trademark striped pants are nowhere to be found in her personal wardrobe. Aside from these minor issues, my wife does not seem particularly displeased with this manga.

Question for you, J-SENSEI!

Question 6:

When you drew cats in your older works, they were quite scary. But in one of your manga, you drew a cat in a very cute way, and it seemed to catch the essence of a cat very well, so your cat-loving editor thought, "Aha! He's got a pet cat now," and forced you to draw a cat-centric manga. Have you been converted from a dog person to a cat person?

Answer:

Yes, I might be a cat person now. When I was a kid, the stray cats on the street corners looked mean and creepy to me, but when you actually live with one, the look in their eyes becomes familiar and adorable. Just as I was realizing that living with cats gives you lots of funny anecdotes and might be worth turning into a manga, my editor brought me this opportunity. I was in awe at my editor's keen insight.

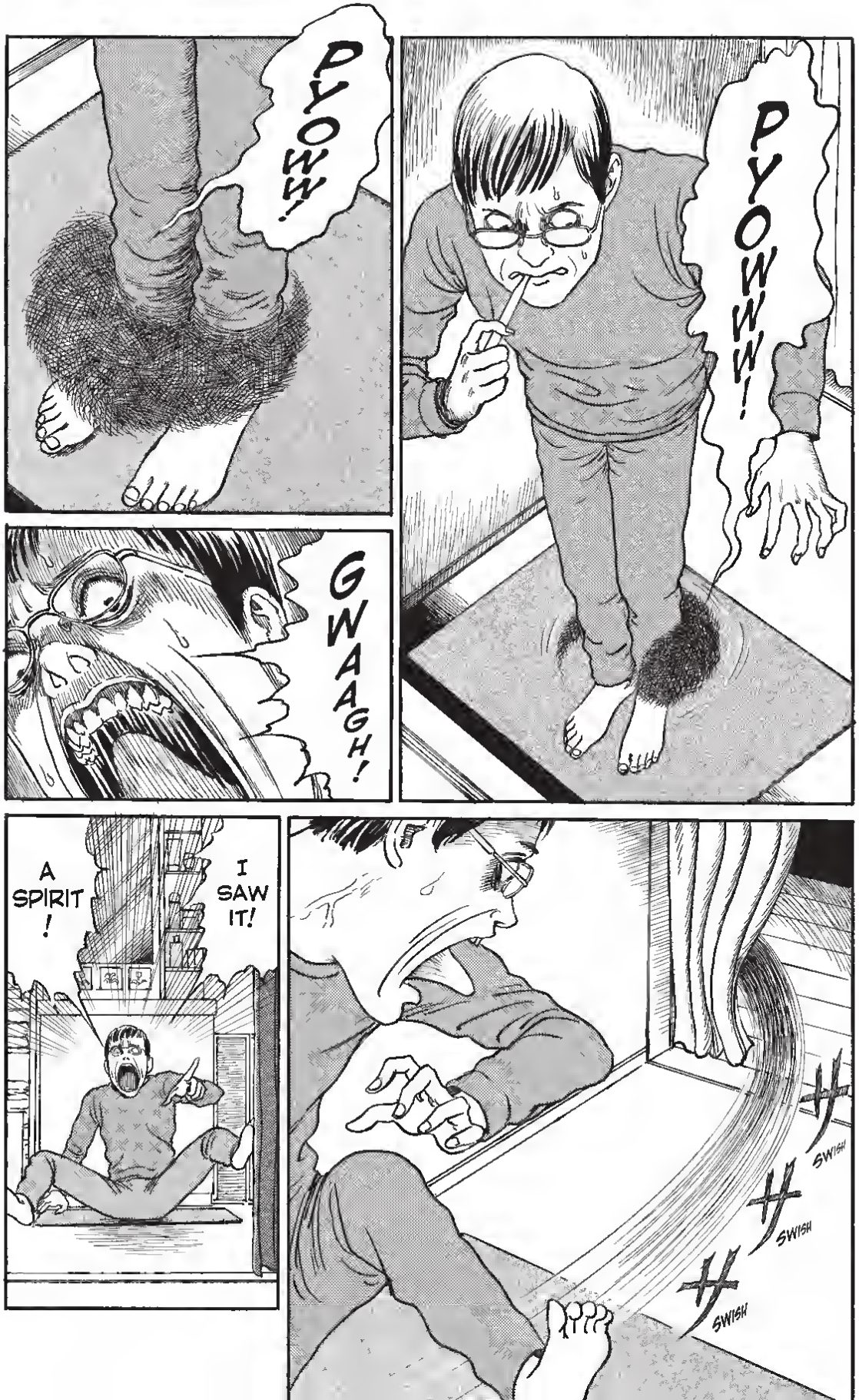
...I feel some kind of presence ...
Every time I visit A-ko's parents in Chiba...
Chapter 9: UNIDENTIFIED CREATURE
sswish
AH!
THERE'S SOME-THING IN THIS HOUSE !!
THERE'S... SOME-THING THERE...

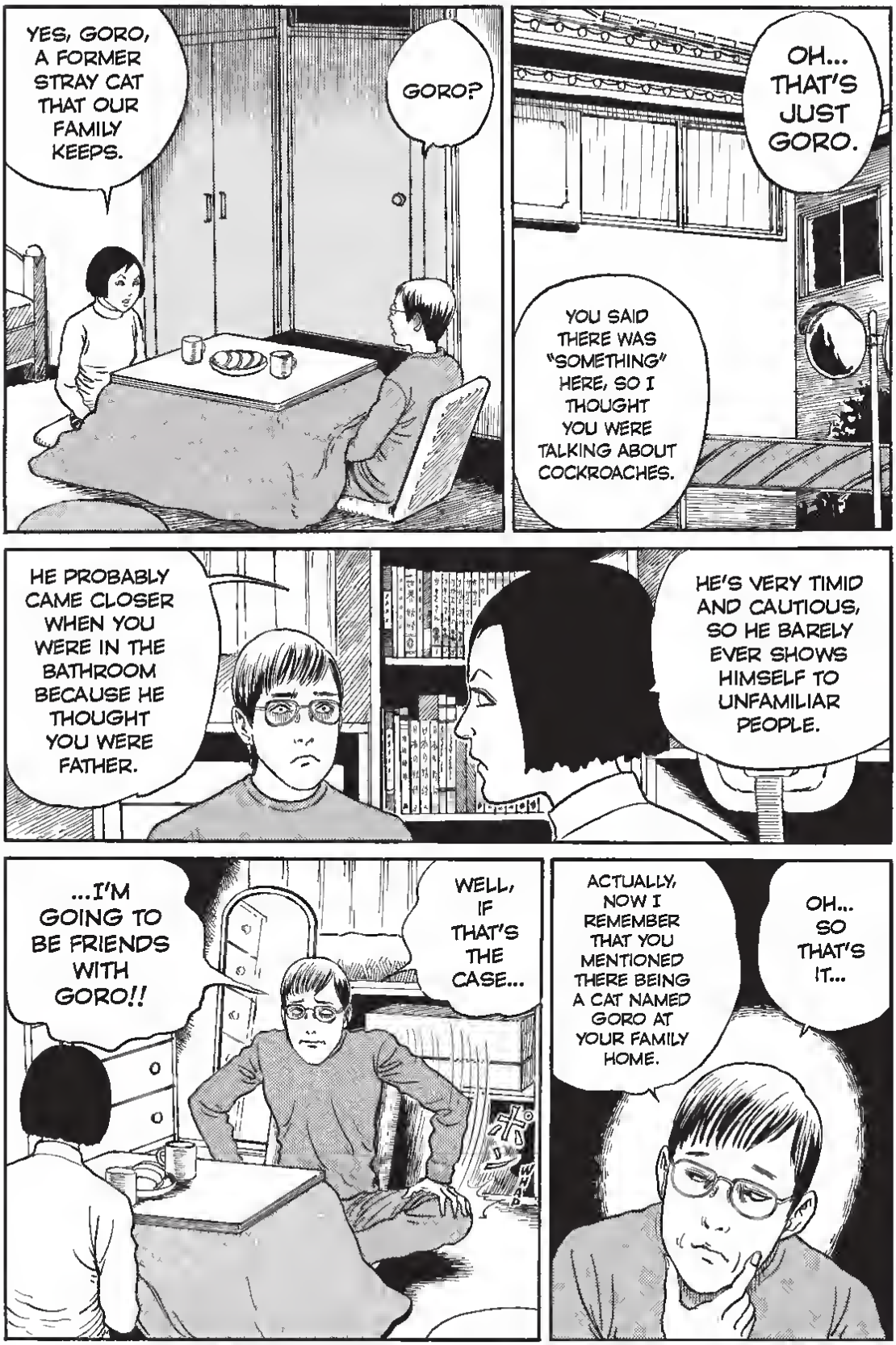
ワハハハハハ
BWA HA HA HA HA HA!
Father-in-law
Mother-in-law
オホホホホ
HO HO HO HO
ワイワイ
ガヤガヤ
*The horror artist is officially married now.
MOTHER ...
BY THE WAY, FATHER ...
ワハハハハハ
WA HA HA HA HA HA
UH...
...IN THIS HOUSE?
IS THERE SOMETHING ELSE...

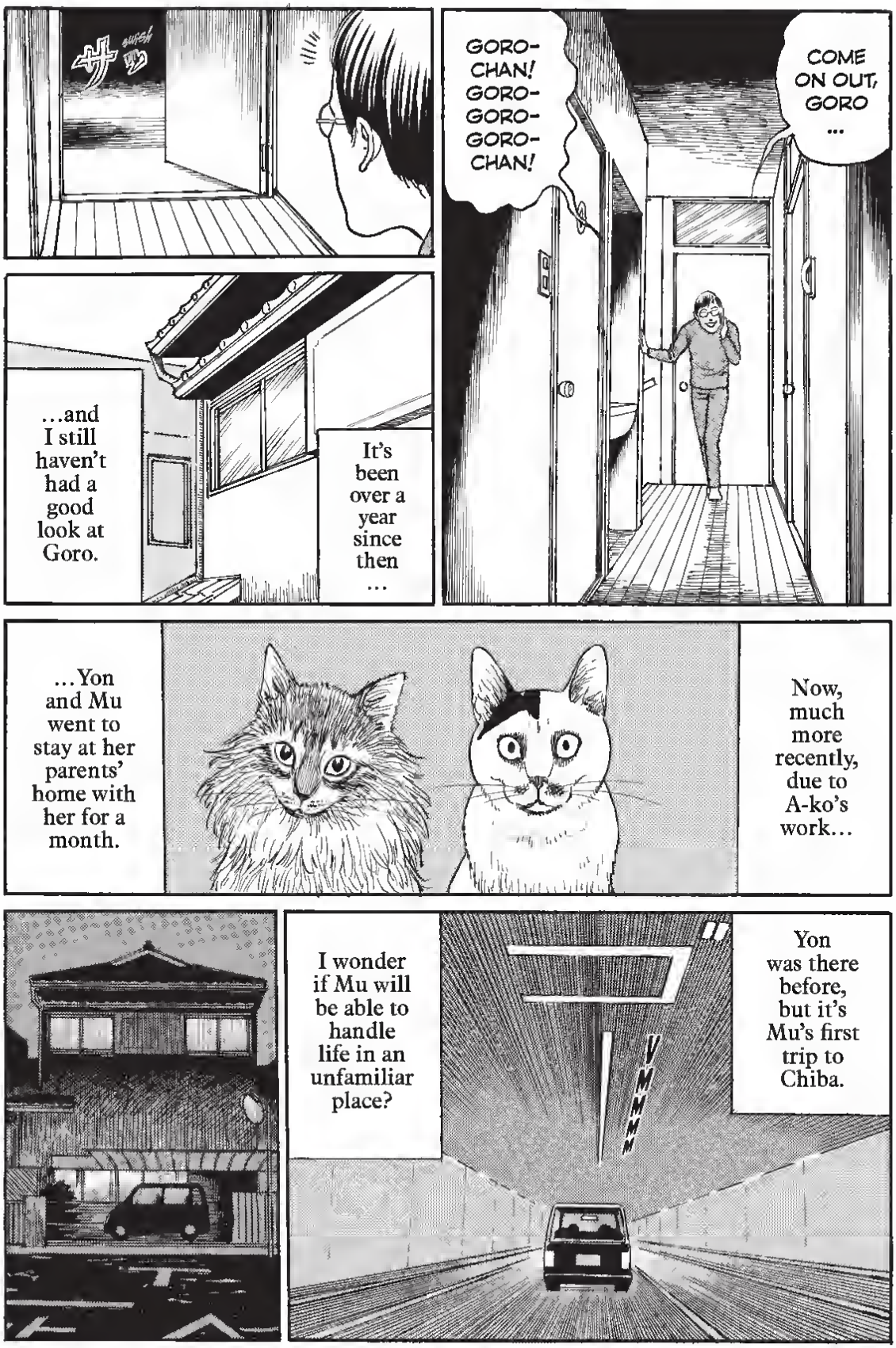
...
...
THIS HOUSE IS HIDING SOME KIND OF SECRET...
ガヤ
ガヤ
ワイ
ワイ
!
CREAK

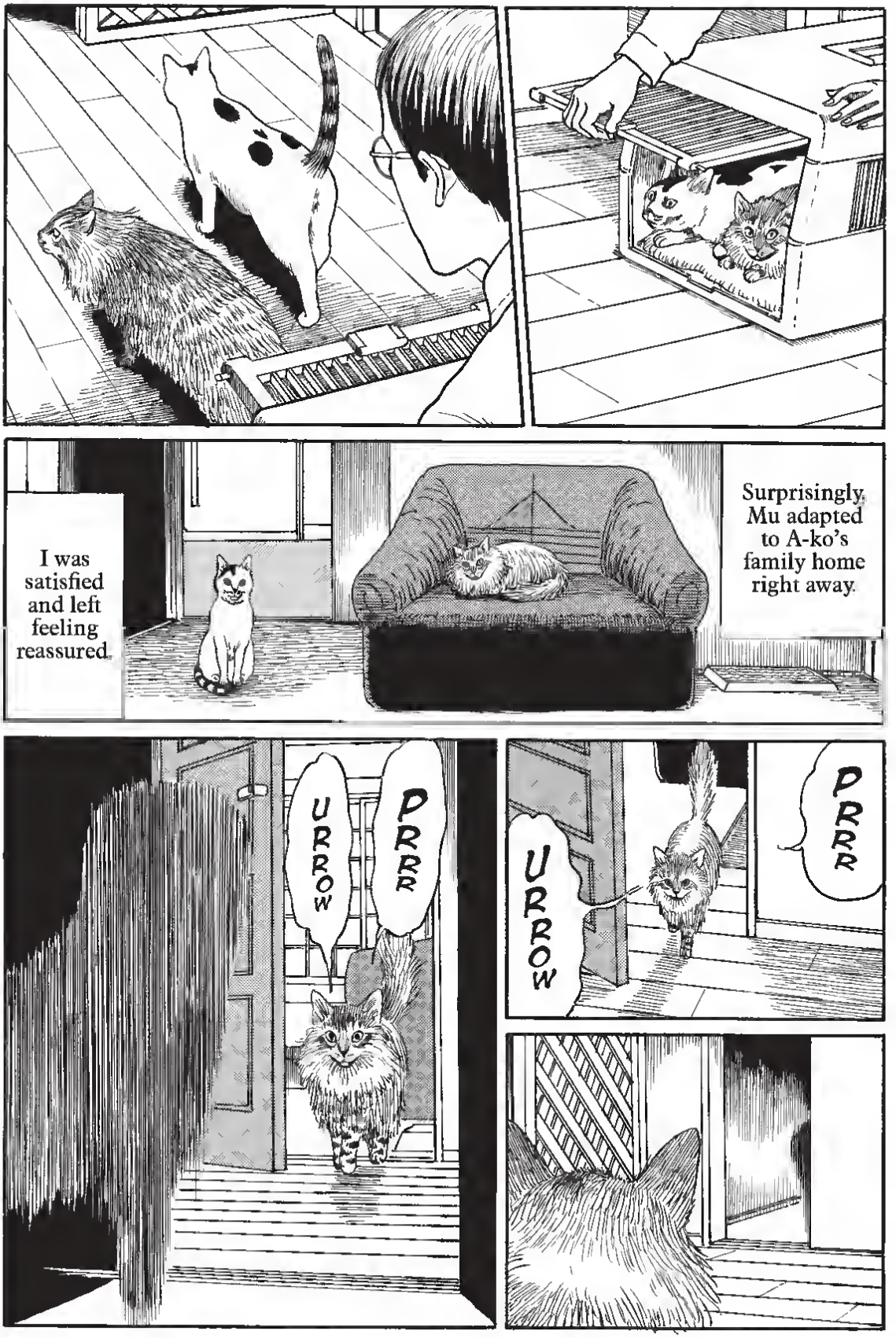
ゴクリ
GU!
SWISH
SWISH
SWISH

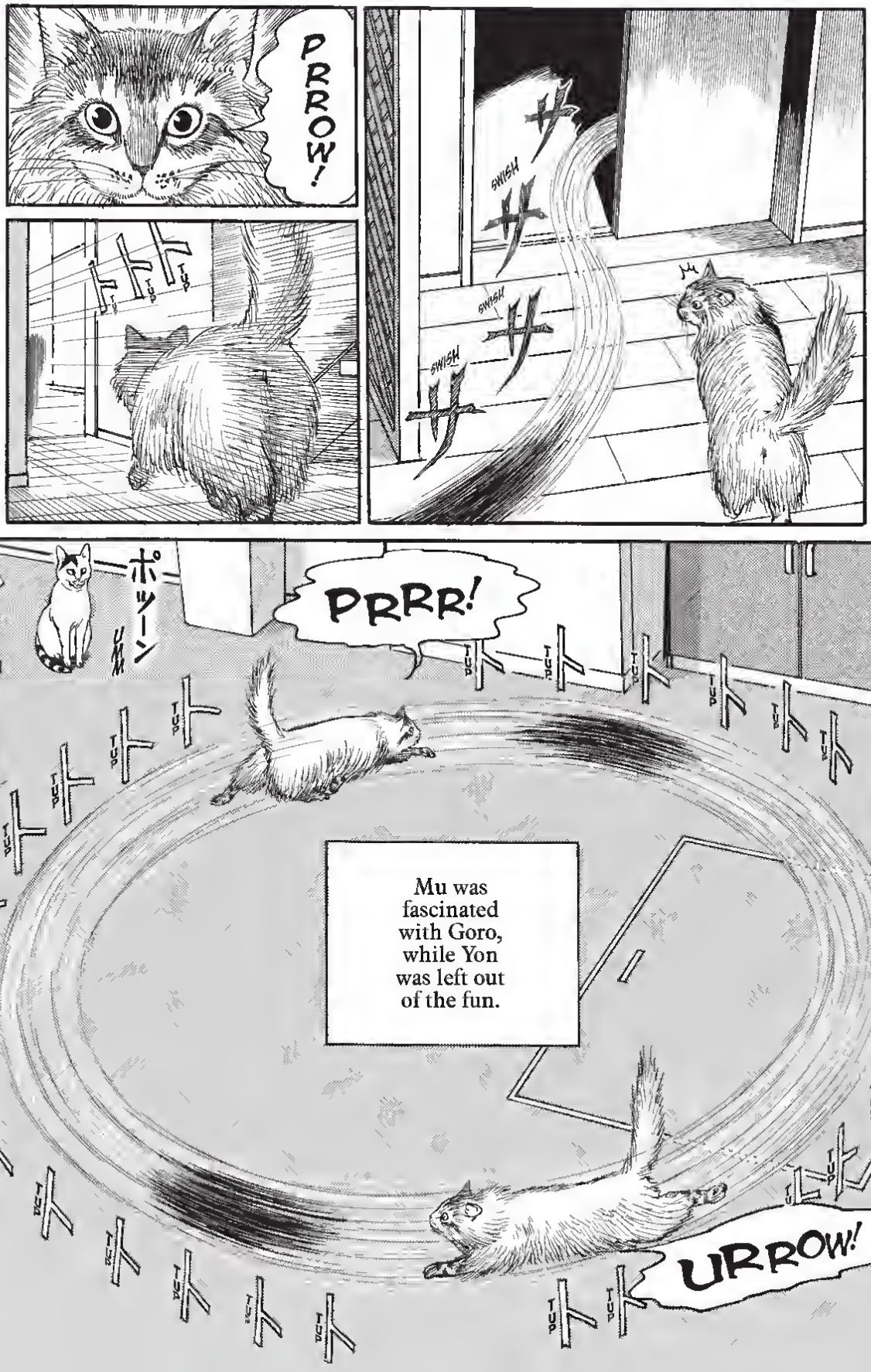
Late at night, as I was brushing my teeth in the bathroom...
HMM ?
SHUCKA
SHUCKA
SHNK
SHNK
PYOWWW
PYOWWW
PYOWWW
PYOWWW
?!
PYOWW!
...WHAT'S MAKING THAT SOUND ?
IT SOUNDS SO UN-EARTHLY ...

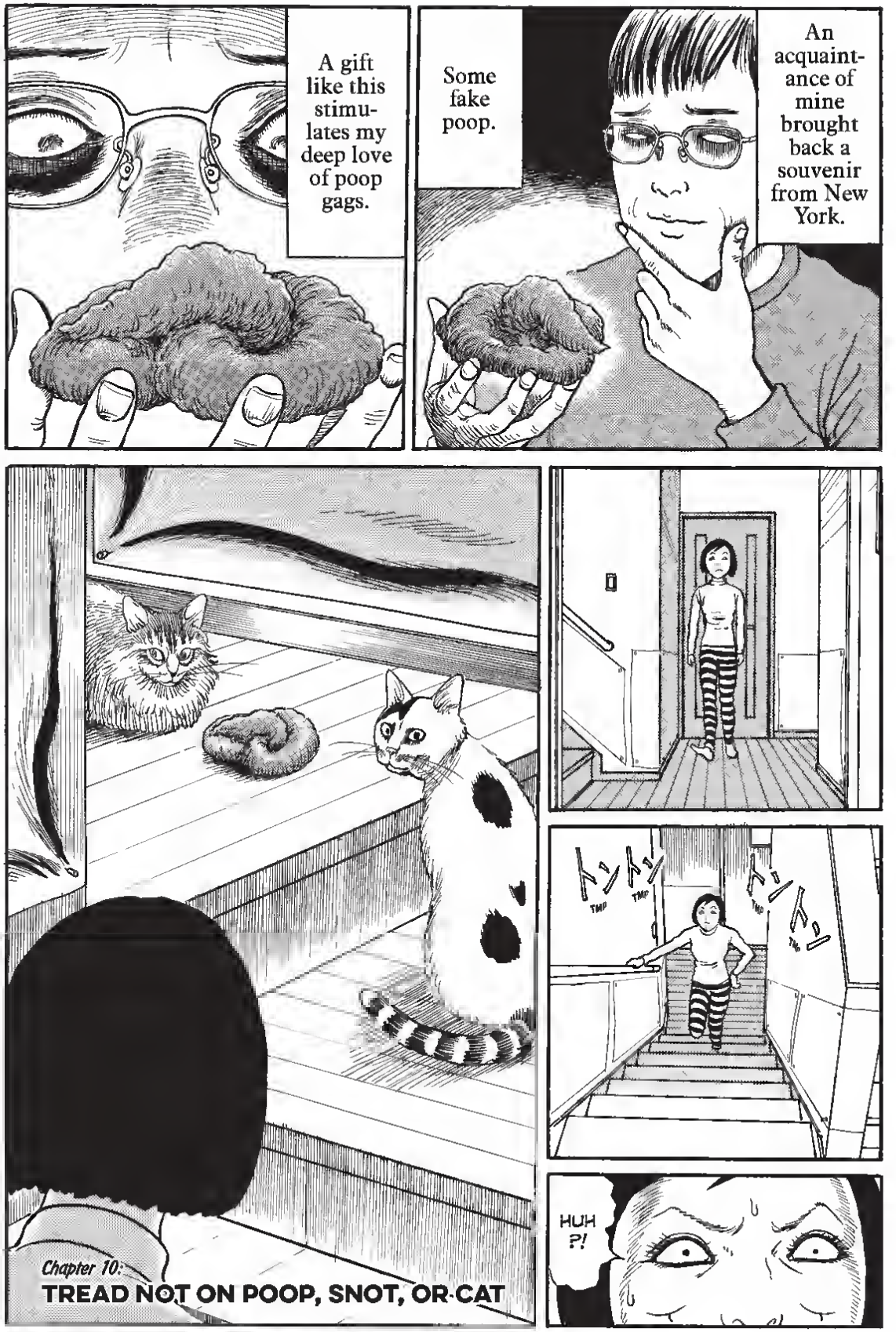

PYOW!
PYOWW!
GWAAGH!
A SPIRIT!
I SAW IT!
SWISH
SWISH
SWISH


YES, GORO, A FORMER STRAY CAT THAT OUR FAMILY KEEPS.
GORO?
OH... THAT'S JUST GORO.
YOU SAID THERE WAS "SOMETHING" HERE, SO I THOUGHT YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT COCKROACHES.
HE PROBABLY CAME CLOSER WHEN YOU WERE IN THE BATHROOM BECAUSE HE THOUGHT YOU WERE FATHER.
HE'S VERY TIMID AND CAUTIOUS, SO HE BARELY EVER SHOWS HIMSELF TO UNFAMILIAR PEOPLE.
...I'M GOING TO BE FRIENDS WITH GORO!!
WELL, IF THAT'S THE CASE...
WHAP
ACTUALLY, NOW I REMEMBER THAT YOU MENTIONED THERE BEING A CAT NAMED GORO AT YOUR FAMILY HOME.
OH... SO THAT'S IT...


sniff sniff
GORO-CHAN! GORO-GORO-GORO-CHAN!
COME ON OUT, GORO ...
It's been over a year since then ...
...and I still haven't had a good look at Goro.
...Yon and Mu went to stay at her parents' home with her for a month.
Now, much more recently, due to A-ko's work...
I wonder if Mu will be able to handle life in an unfamiliar place?
VMMMM
Yon was there before, but it's Mu's first trip to Chiba.

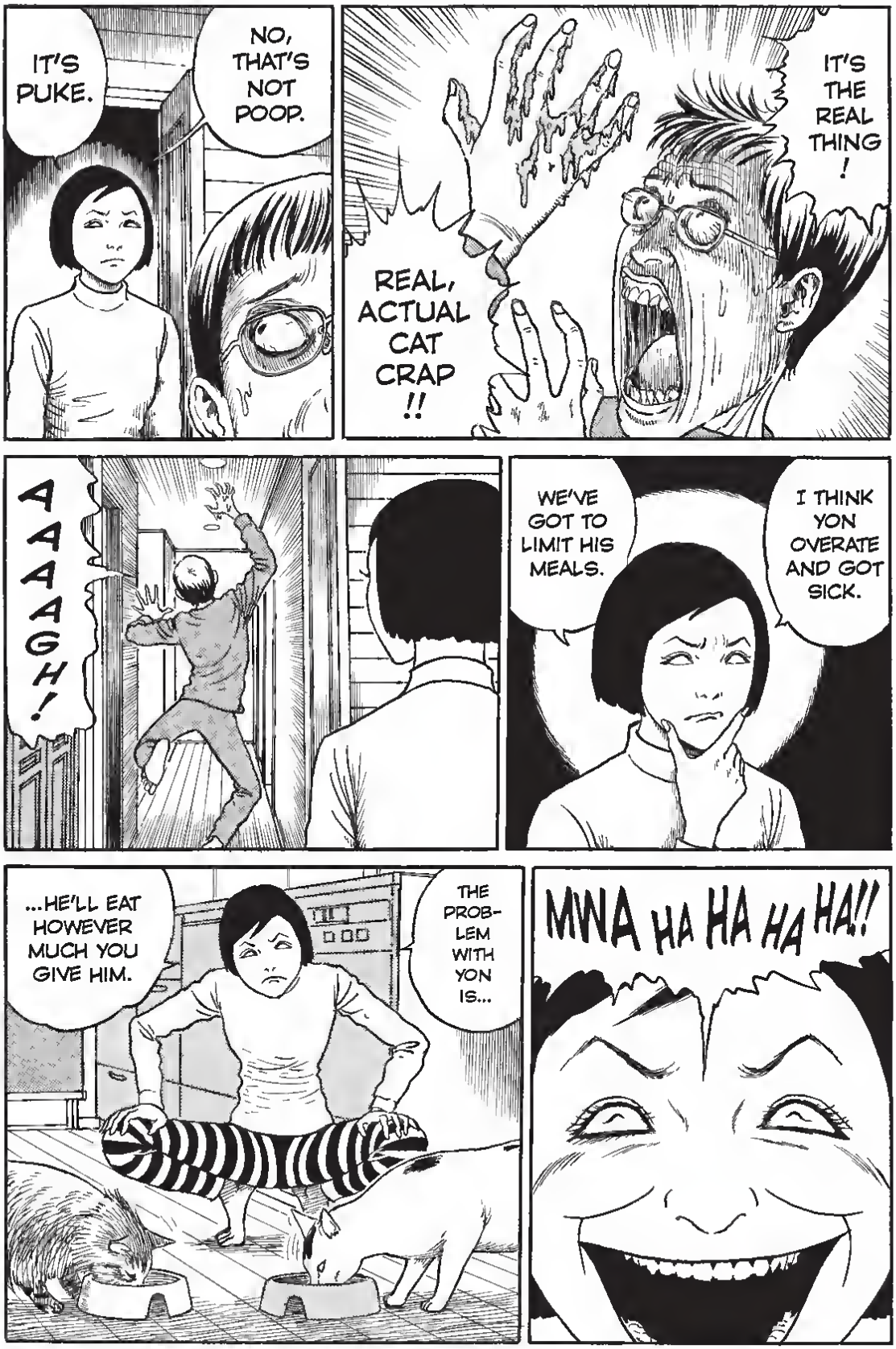

I was satisfied and left feeling reassured.
Surprisingly, Mu adapted to A-ko's family home right away.
PRRR
URROW
PRRR
URROW


PRROW!
SWISH
SWISH
SWISH
ポッーン
PRRR!
Mu was fascinated with Goro, while Yon was left out of the fun.
URROW!


A gift like this stimulates my deep love of poop gags.
Some fake poop.
An acquaintance of mine brought back a souvenir from New York.
Chapter 10:
TREAD NOT ON POOP, SNOT, OR CAT
トントン
TMP
TMP
トントン
TMP
HUH ?!

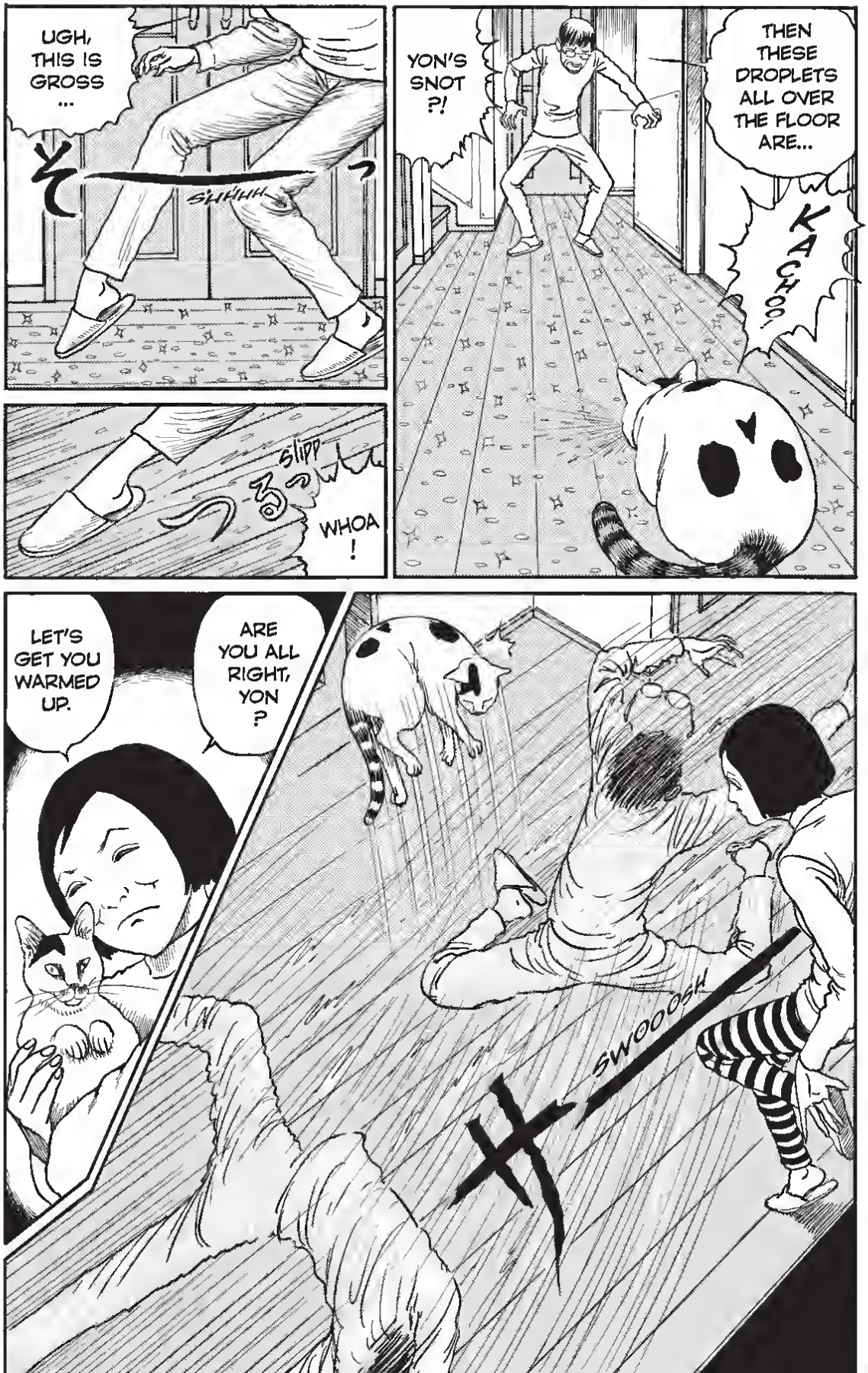
OH... NO, MOTHER! STAY THERE, THE CATS HAD AN ACCIDENT.
WHAT'S WRONG, A-CHAN?
AAAARGH!!
OH, IT'S JUST POOP.
LOOK, J-KUN!
WHAT'S WRONG, A-KO?
GACK!
ポイ
TOSS
HERE.
ナ
SNAG
EWW!

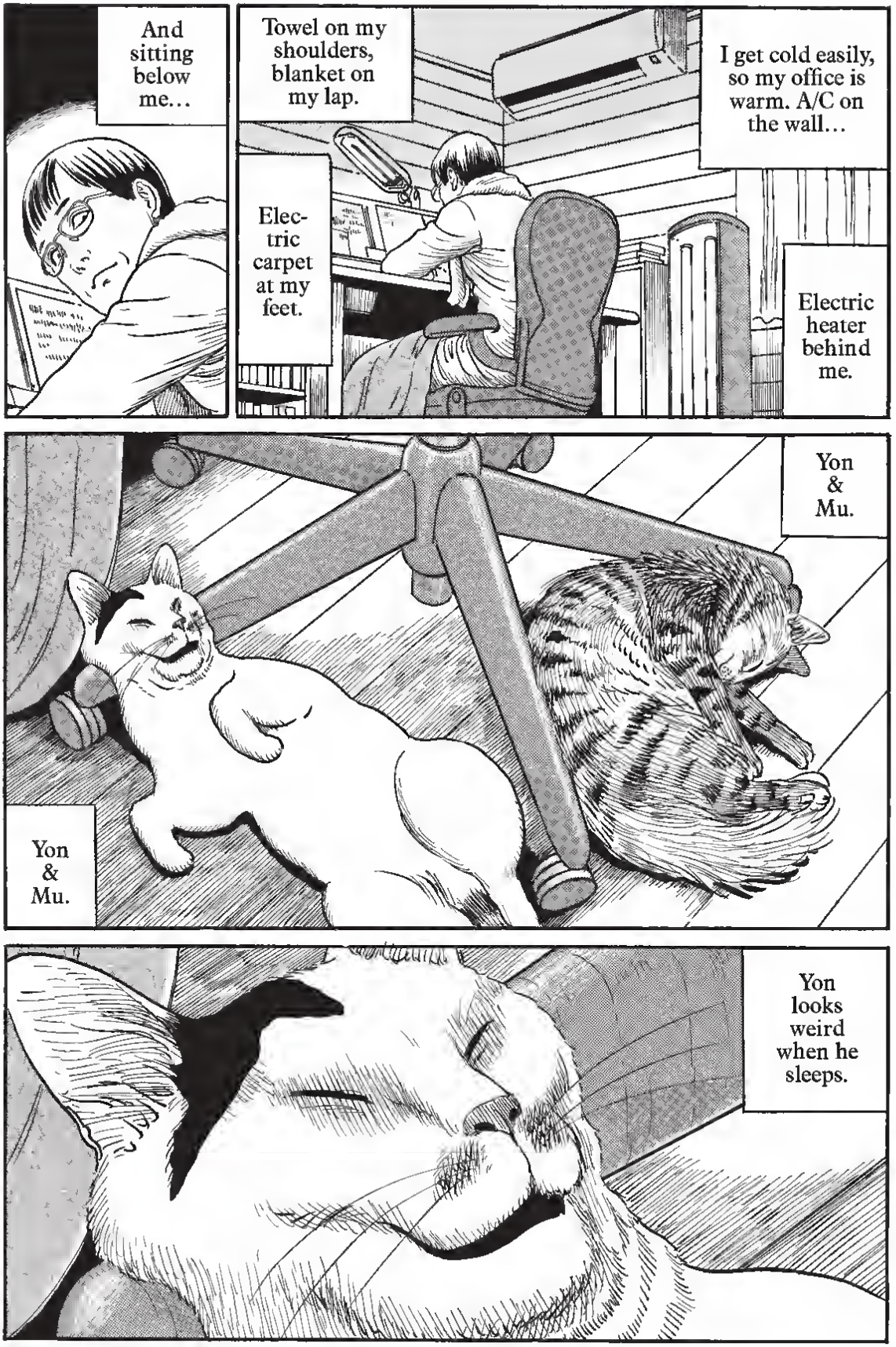
うはははは
BWA HA HA HA HA!
IT'S A STUPID TOY! YOU TRICKED ME, J!!
コン
KONK
HMM?
ガチャ
CLICK
A few days later
NWAH !!
AHA, IT'S A-KO GETTING HER RE-VENGE...
WHAT IS THIS DOING HERE?
グチョ
SPLURCH

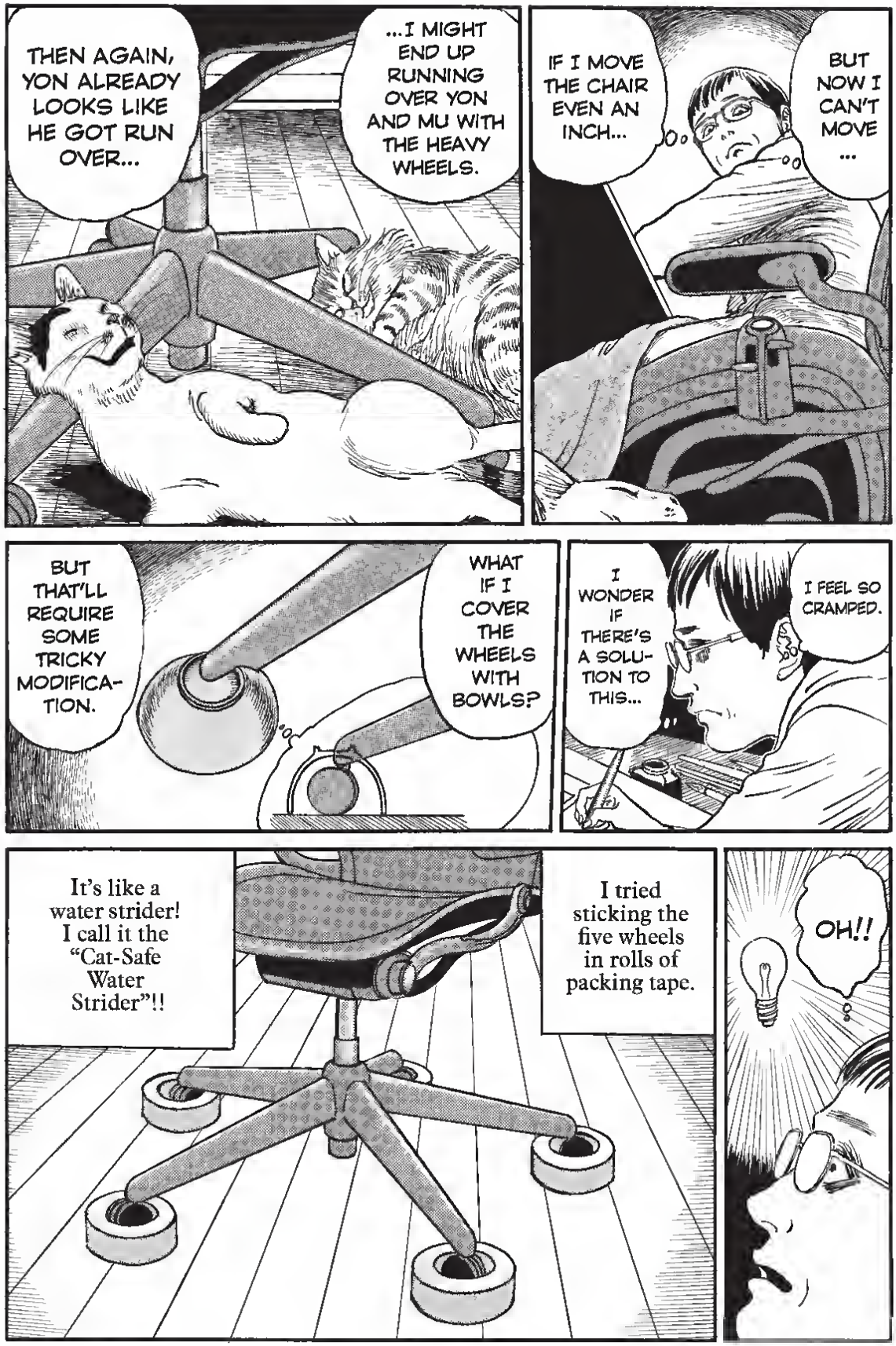

IT'S PUKE.
NO, THAT'S NOT POOP.
REAL, ACTUAL CAT CRAP !!
IT'S THE REAL THING !
AAAAGH!
WE'VE GOT TO LIMIT HIS MEALS.
I THINK YON OVERATE AND GOT SICK.
...HE'LL EAT HOWEVER MUCH YOU GIVE HIM.
THE PROB-LEM WITH YON IS...
MWA HA HA HA HA!!

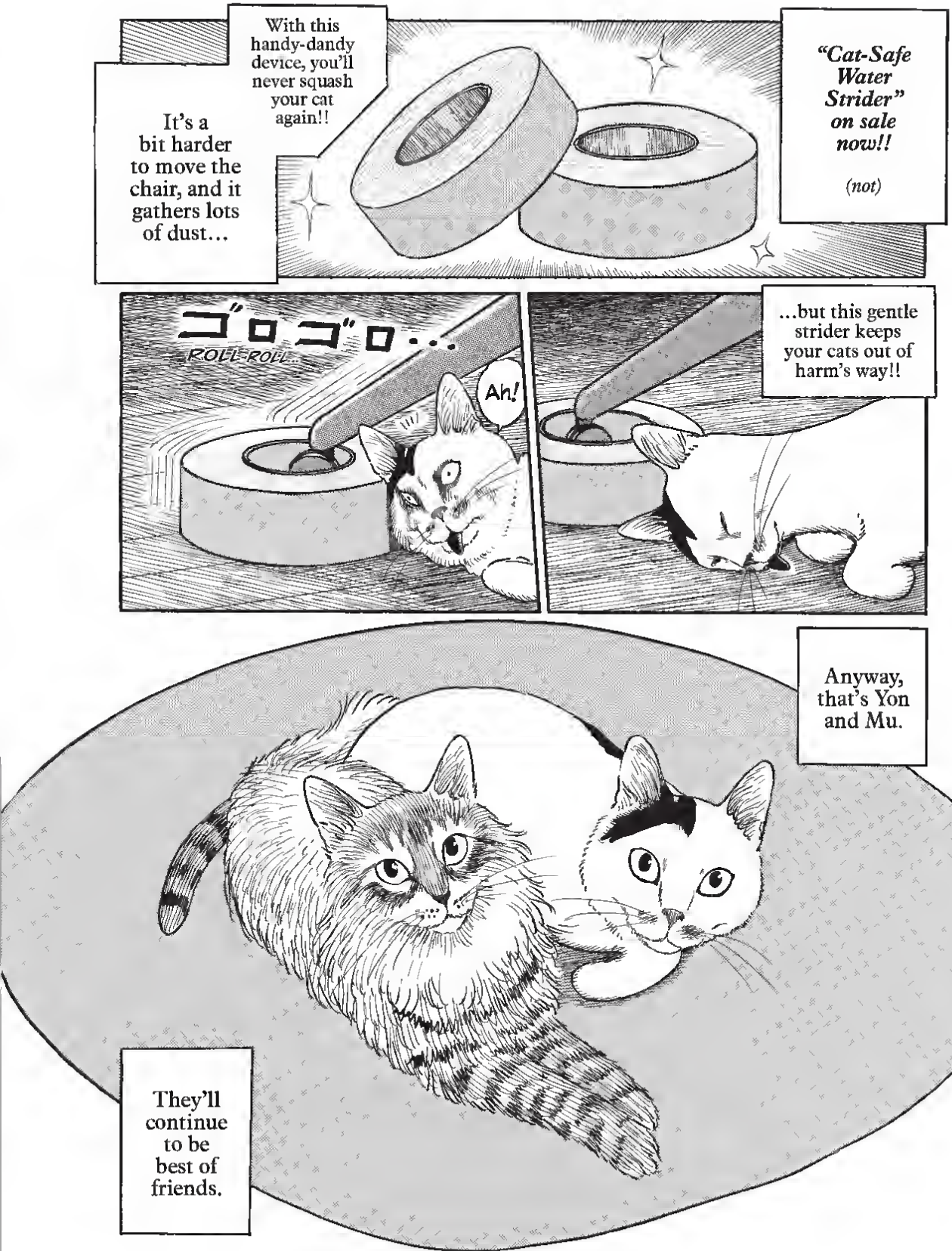
MUNCH MUNCH
MUNCH MUNCH
MOOOP
A-ko's still very concerned about his health.
When Yon was young, he was small and sickly.
YON!! STOP EATING MU'S FOOD!

IS THERE FROST IN HERE?
HMM? WHAT'S ALL THIS SPARKLY STUFF ON THE FLOOR?
BRR, CHILLY.
In our rural city, the winters are cold.
KACHOO!!
HUH ?!
SOME KIND OF LIQUID ...?
WHAT COULD IT BE, THEN?
FROST IN THE HOUSE? NAHH.
YON'S CAUGHT A COLD.
KACHOO!
KACHOO!


UGH, THIS IS GROSS ...
SHHHH
YON'S SNOT ?!
THEN THESE DROPLETS ALL OVER THE FLOOR ARE...
KACHOO!
SLIPP
WHOA !
LET'S GET YOU WARMED UP.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, YON ?
SWOOOSH


And sitting below me...
Towel on my shoulders, blanket on my lap.
I get cold easily, so my office is warm. A/C on the wall...
Elec-tric carpet at my feet.
Electric heater behind me.
Yon & Mu.
Yon & Mu.
Yon looks weird when he sleeps.


THEN AGAIN, YON ALREADY LOOKS LIKE HE GOT RUN OVER...
...I MIGHT END UP RUNNING OVER YON AND MU WITH THE HEAVY WHEELS.
IF I MOVE THE CHAIR EVEN AN INCH...
BUT NOW I CAN'T MOVE ...
BUT THAT'LL REQUIRE SOME TRICKY MODIFICATION.
WHAT IF I COVER THE WHEELS WITH BOWLS?
I WONDER IF THERE'S A SOLUTION TO THIS...
I FEEL SO CRAMPED.
It's like a water strider! I call it the "Cat-Safe Water Strider"!!
I tried sticking the five wheels in rolls of packing tape.
OH!!


It's a bit harder to move the chair, and it gathers lots of dust...
With this handy-dandy device, you'll never squash your cat again!!
"Cat-Safe Water Strider" on sale now!!
(not)
ゴロゴロ...
-ROLL-ROLL-
Ah!
...but this gentle strider keeps your cats out of harm's way!!
Anyway, that's Yon and Mu.
They'll continue to be best of friends.

The End

Question for you, J-SENSEI!

Question 7:

You are now known as a horror manga artist, but is it true that before your professional debut, you were more of a gag manga artist?

Answer:

When I drew for fun, I did both horror and comedy. I had a number of original characters who made quite a splash in my old grade-school comics: Big Dummy, Pose-Man, Little Dummy, and various other hits. Lots of my serious horror works would also start getting boring to me partway through, and would then turn comical in the latter parts.

Question 8:

This year (2009) is your 22nd as a manga artist. What are your goals for your 25th anniversary?

Answer:

I'll just keep taking things one day at a time, like I always have. But if I had to say one concrete goal, it would be to make a manga out of a novel that I wrote once for a video game. I hope my readers will continue to read my works.

Questions: *Editor I-buchi* ***Answers:*** *Author Junji Ito* ***Date:*** *January 2009*

After getting married, J and A-ko moved into a secondhand home in the same city along with their cats. It was an eccentric home, with an atrium-style living room, a large, sooty wood stove, and a very wide staircase like on a stage from a Takarazuka theater.

An atrium-style living room in this chilly, mountainous region is just the sort of layout that calls for the installation of a wooden stove. But J had no idea how to handle a wood stove. Plus, it would be dangerous to have cats leaping up onto it, and there are concerns that their children could get burned if they were to have any. Ultimately, they decided to scrap the wood stove.

When they called a wood stove vender to ask how it should be disposed of, the vendor said he would visit to show them how to use it.

"No, no, I just want to get rid of it," J repeated. But the vendor pointed out that such stoves were lifetime fixtures worth 700,000 yen (approx. $7,000 US), and cost 100,000 (approx. $1,000 US) to take out, so why not use it just once and see what you think?

A few days later, an elderly tecŸician came out and fixed a few broken parts without being asked, sprayed the sooty exterior black and made it look good as new. He tossed in some wood and lit it with a piece of newspaper.

The wood began to crackle pleasantly, and the room was soon full of warmth.

"A wood stove emits infrared light, so it warms you up from inside. After a good session around a wood stove, I can shovel snow outside for two hours without getting cold."

The elderly man seemed to be really into stoves. He plopped down happily right in front of it.

"People who love wood stoves all sit in a circle around the front of the heater and talk," he laughed. "And the top of the stove can be used to cook, so it's a hit with the ladies."

He added more wood, pleased that A-ko seemed to be taking an interest. J gave voice to one of his concerns. "We do have cats, though…"

Yon and Mu had hidden upstairs when the old fellow showed up.

"Ha ha ha. Cats don't jump up on the stove; they're too smart. I've been dealing with wood stoves for decades, and I've never once heard of a cat jumping on top of one. Huh? You're worried about kids getting burned? Ha ha ha. Well, they sell proper fences to keep them away. If you end up needing one, I can order it right away."

As the old man talked, the stove fire started to burn ever brighter, and the room was filled with a nostalgic, woody scent and comforting warmth.

Ultimately, J and A-ko decided to use the stove, and purchased a hundred bundles from the old man for the winter. Each bundle cost 500 yen (approx. $5 US), adding up to 50,000 yen (approx. $500 US) in total.

That day was the start of their wood stove life. J had never imagined that he would grow accustomed to using such a thing.

"With this new skill, I could keep warm anywhere, even in a shack during the middle of winter," J thought secretly, pleased with himself despite the fact that he had no intention of becoming a mountain-climber.

One morning, J got up late as usual and walked down to the living room, where A-ko grumbled, "Yon jumped up on the stove this morning."

"What?!"

"It was just after the last embers from yesterday went out, so it wasn't hot enough to burn him, but it must still have been pretty hot, because he danced around for a second before jumping right back off."

J imagined Yon dancing on top of the metal stove.

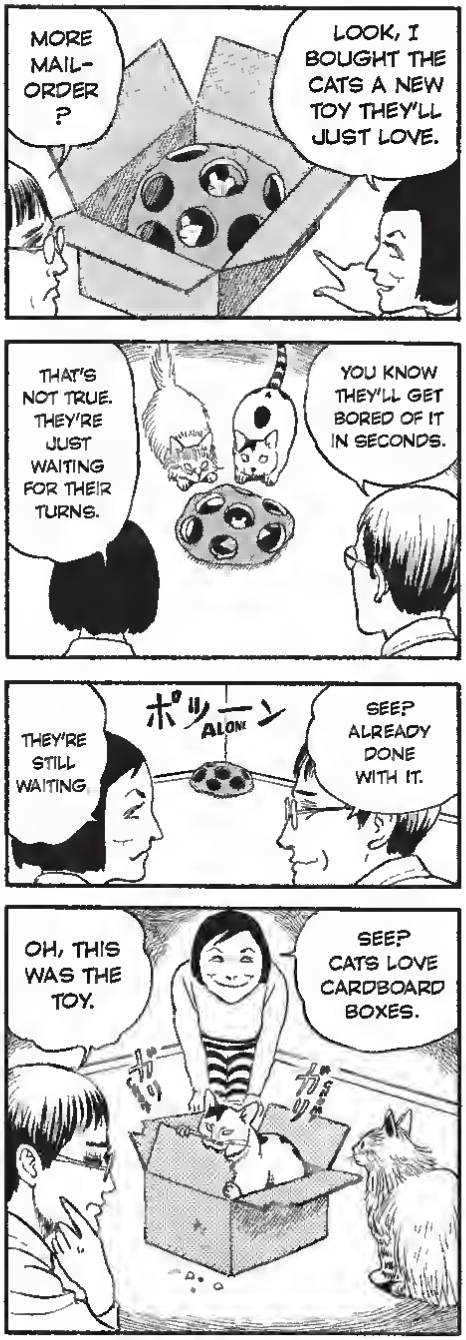
There was no way to tell if the old man had lied or if Yon was just a really dumb cat.

Just as J had always suspected, the wood stove was a costly item. A day's worth of wood cost at least 1,500 yen (approx. $15 US). They started to cut back, so as not to lose too much money, switching over to a gas stove for heating. In the end, they never used the wood stove to boil or cook anything, and it was sold, along with the leftover logs, to a friend who owned a bar.

JUNJI ITO'S CAT DIARY:

YON & MU

LOVEY DOVEY LOVE ♥


MORE MAIL-ORDER ?
LOOK, I BOUGHT THE CATS A NEW TOY THEY'LL JUST LOVE.
THAT'S NOT TRUE. THEY'RE JUST WAITING FOR THEIR TURNS.
YOU KNOW THEY'LL GET BORED OF IT IN SECONDS.
THEY'RE STILL WAITING.
ポツーン
ALONE
SEE? ALREADY DONE WITH IT.
OH, THIS WAS THE TOY.
SEE? CATS LOVE CARDBOARD BOXES.

DON'T LOOK ♥

PROFILE:

JUNJI ITO

Born in Gifu Prefecture, 1963. Horror manga artist.
Debuted in *Monthly Halloween* in 1987.
Previously a dental tecŸician.
Transferred to manga entirely in 1990.
His signature works include *Tomie*, the *Souichi* series, *Lovesick Dead*, *Uzumaki*, and others.

TRANSLATION NOTES

Page 3: Building a house in Japan
In the United States and other Western countries, it is typical to purchase a used house, but in Japan, this is relatively uncommon. In many cases, a family saves money with the goal of building a new house rather than purchasing an existing one.

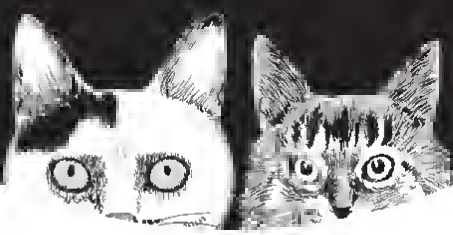
Page 10: Yon and Mu
The word "yon" is one of the ways to say "four" in Japanese. Goro means "fifth son," and "mu" is one of the ways to say "six."

Page 39: Semi-double
A bed size that is uncommon outside of Japan. Whereas a twin size bed is usually 90 cm wide (approx. 35.4 cm) a semi-double is 120 cm (approx. 47.2 cm).

Page 52: Tsuchinoko
A legendary Japanese creature (cryptid) that resembles a very wide snake, or possibly a legless alligator. The tsuchinoko is said to be quite venomous and is able to jump several feet in the air.

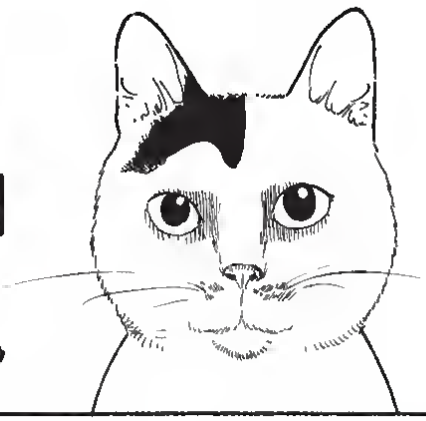
BONUS MANGA

Kodansha Comics is pleased to bring you special bonus material for the English language edition of *Junji Ito's Cat Diary: Yon & Mu*. On the following pages are a short comic and letter penned respectively by J-kun (Junji Ito) and his wife, A-ko (Ayako Ishiguro). In Japan, they were published as contributions to a book created in support of cat shelters following the Great Tohoku Earthquake of 2011. The Japanese title of the original book is *Maikeru Oshiete! Hisai Neko Ouen no Kyoukasho* (*Teach Me, Michael! A Textbook in Support of Feline Disaster Victims*).

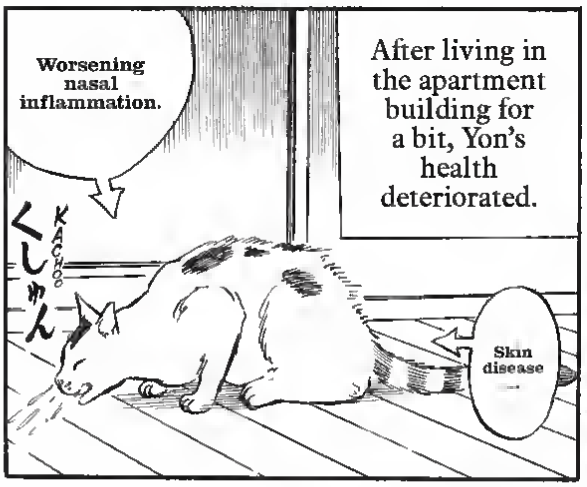


YON & MU

YON WENT TO HEAVEN



Junji Ito



After living in the apartment building for a bit, Yon's health deteriorated.

In the summer of 2010, J's family moved to Chiba.

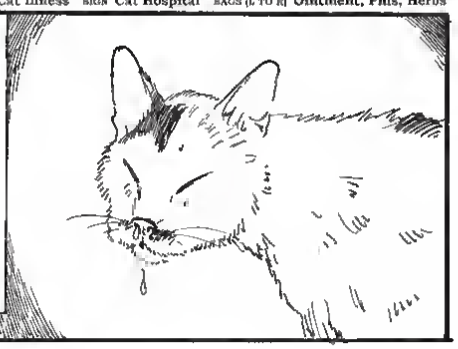
It seems to have been from heart failure.

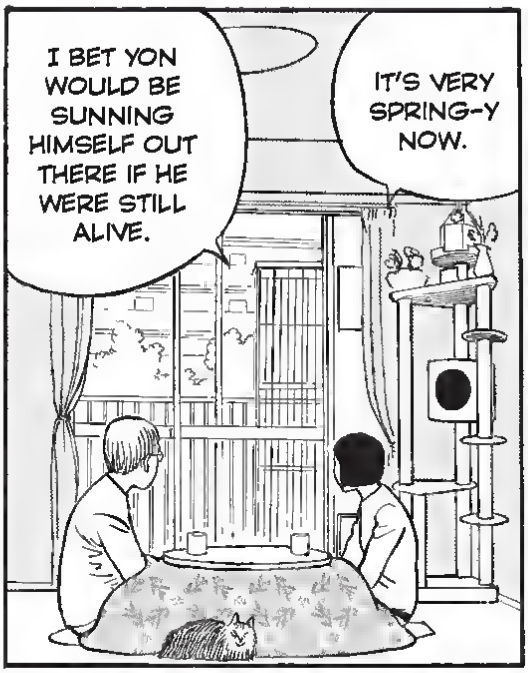
Until on the morning of February 3rd, 2011, when he suddenly passed on.

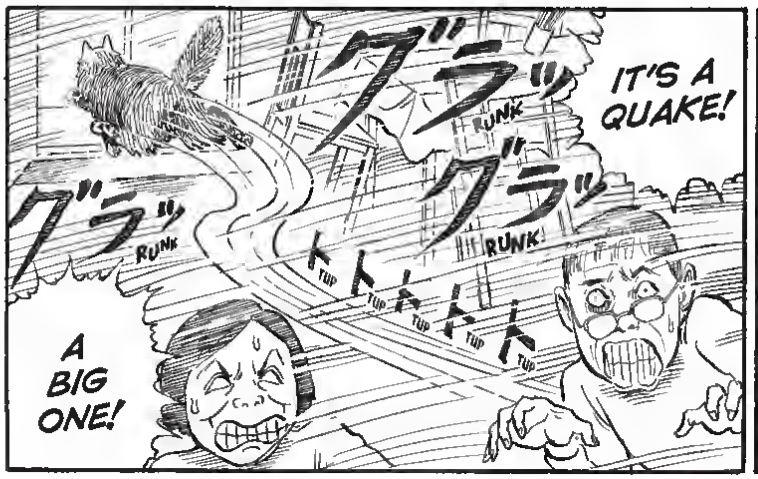
A-ko did everything she could think of, to no avail.

PIC Cat Illness SIGN Cat Hospital BAGS (L TO R) Ointment, Pills, Herbs

His symptoms bounced back and forth for a while...



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IT'S A QUAKE!
トトトト

As J's manga showed, Yonsuke up and died on us. For a while, he wandered around my legs, until eventually he realized, "Oh? I don't feel any pain anymore, and my body is light and breezy. I can go anywhere!" And so he flew away, over the horizon.

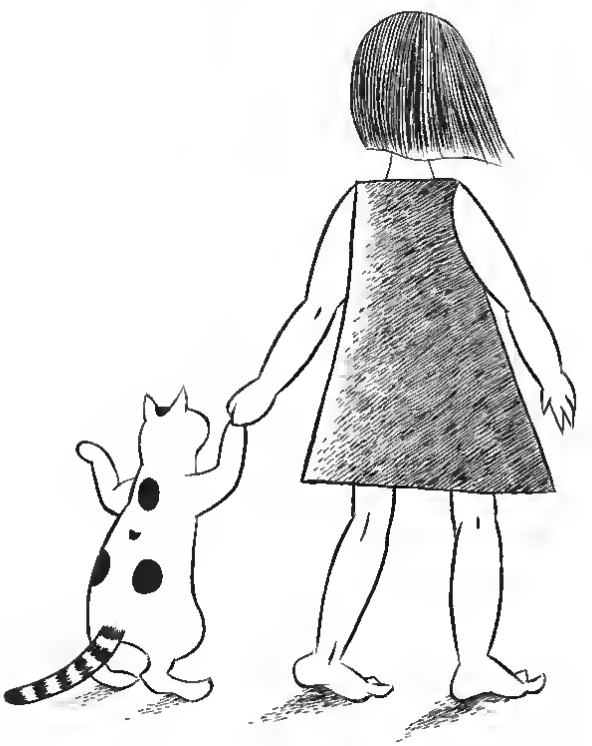
The next morning, I carried Yonsuke out onto the veranda, where we spent our last moment together. I put my pinky to his mouth, but he didn't suckle anymore. I was saddened by the sight of his firmly shut eyes and mouth, and I cried again.

By the end of the day, Yonsuke's remains were cremated.

I kept crying, over and over, and it was the first time I had seen J, who was right next to me, cry like that. I'm sure that if Yonsuke was there to see, he would meow with his eyes wide and rub against us, wondering what could make two grown adults behave like that. He would be helping us feel better by telling us not to cry, because it was annoying him.

"It's a wonderful thing for stuff to just be normal, don't you think?"

That was a quote a friend of mine said to me so many times, it got stuck in my brain. Those words really made sense to me after Yonsuke died. Shortly afterward, the great earthquake on 3/11 caused terrible upheaval. I was truly thankful that the people I care about were able to continue their lives the same as before. And hey, at least Yonsuke didn't have to undergo such a terrifying ordeal.



Yonsuke was the star of our household, even in manga form. No matter how creepy his face was, be was my precious little baby. Thank you for supporting me, no matter how useless I was at times.

I miss you each and every day, Yonsuke!

A-ko

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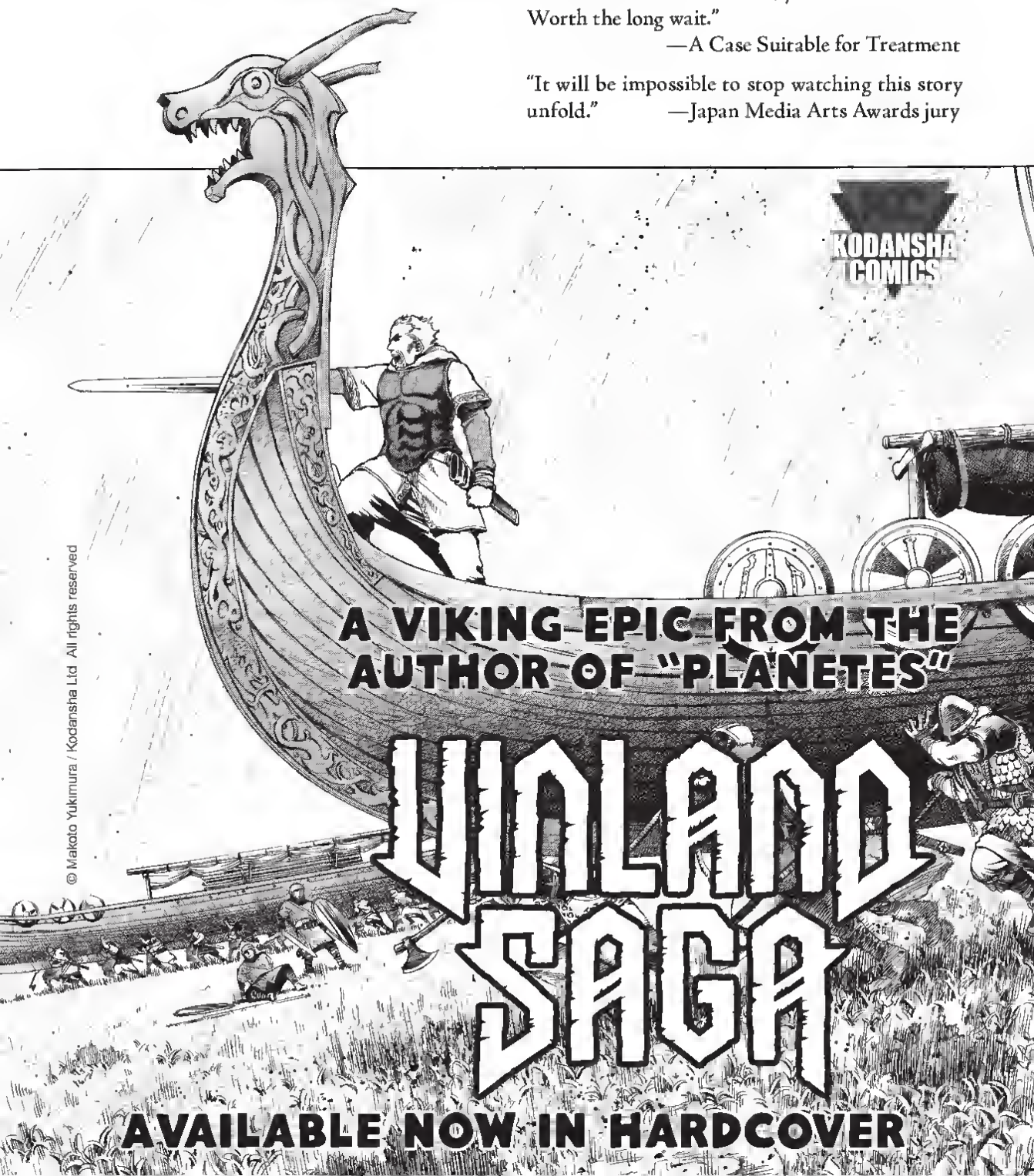

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KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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